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Book Reviews

Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. By Arjun Appadurai. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Pp. xi+229. $18.95.

Martin Albrow
Roehampton Institute

This is a collection of sole-authored essays revolving around questions concerning the end of the nation-state, diaspora, new modernity, deterritorialization, the concept of culture, postcolonialism, the production of locality, flows, and "'scapes" and the work of the imagination. The author is a prominent advocate both for a new postnational discourse and an anthropology that captures the qualities of translocal culture. He has distanced himself from dominant academic establishments by extending his intellectual interests across the boundaries of literature, history, ethnography, and politics and by foregrounding his own biography as a traveler across continents. At the universities of Pennsylvania and Chicago, he has steered transnational studies into the field of cultural globalization, deliberately seeking to render the specifics of our age as a new intellectual project.

Broadly in book catalog terms, *Modernity at Large* will be found in the field of cultural studies. But its arguments amount to a constant provocation for sociologists, a challenge to the way we think and do our work. We should attend to them because they concern concepts that have been central for decades in sociological accounts of the contemporary world. Effectively they highlight how wedded sociology has been to concepts that often appear as abstract, analytical, and universal but are in fact expressions of a particular time and place. Culture, ethnicity, neighborhood, and modernity are focal topics in narrative accounts of our time, part of wider public discourse rather than simply scientific constructs. Moreover, faced with a competitor account, sociology has to acknowledge that it too is a purveyor of a special kind of present-day history writing.

It is one of Appadurai's theses that the contemporary world has transformed the imagination via the media and made it public. His own work represents the imagination at large in the social sciences and for that reason alone these essays repay reading. They are at their most convincing in his accounts of the uses of statistical measurement in the colonization of India and then again in the Indian appropriation of the game of cricket from its British masters. Both depend for their effect on the wrenching of a topic from its taken-for-granted roots—statistics in science and ad-

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ministration, cricket in the leisure of the British gentleman—and showing how it becomes the property or technique of another.

His admiration for the resilience of colonized peoples is the reflex of his own effort to be an agent in this postcolonial expropriation of the old masters. Few of the structures of modernization remain unshaken as a result, though not all are, like the nation-state, the subject of frontal assault. Appadurai unequivocally announces the impending end of the era of the nation-state. Two forces are paramount for him in this demise, the new media technology and migration. Cultural globalization for him is where both the imagination and movement can cross boundaries. They are the unsettling and exciting aspects of a modernity beyond the nation-state.

As a genre, these essays belong to the self-conscious reflection of the free-floating intellectual, which the academy requires today to position itself in irregular flows of markets and political forces. They negotiate the interfaces of academic disciplines, public life, and the personal and moral commitments of the scholar. As such they make the professional sociologist uncomfortably aware of how much of traditional sociology has been sold out to the dominant powers of nation-state, political party, or business. But then there is equally the reassurance in being found useful by someone.

However brilliant, these essays have their own limitations, even self-imposed. Appadurai is careful in his own conceptualization of culture as the constitution of difference to refuse to equate it with the actual social group. In effect he thus permits such entities as groups to have real grounds for existence other than culture. But he gives us little clue as to how one might approach the facticity of this social reality. The problem is that, as a result, many sociologists are going to write these essays off as literary exercises. That would be a pity. This reviewer and his colleagues in London have found how useful it is to extrapolate from Appadurai's "'scapes" to take in the idea of "socioscape" (see J. Eade, ed., *Living the Global City* [Routledge, 1997]). We think "'scapes" unlocks a perspective for empirical social research that can do more justice to local/global relations than older notions of community and neighborhood. As a stimulus to the sociological imagination for current research, Appadurai has few rivals. But we should also be wary of lesser imitations.

The Global Age: State and Society beyond Modernity. By Martin Albrow. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997. Pp. ix+246. $45.00 (cloth); $17.95 (paper).

Saskia Sassen
Columbia University

The intellectual project in this book is an interesting one: how to understand the contemporary era without referencing modernism. What are

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the categories, the history, the narratives, the self-reflexivity that mark the global age, an age the author sees as discontinuous with the past, and that can constitute an account that is neither modernist, postmodernist, or antimodernist? The narrative of modernism is, after all, exquisitely adept at incorporating innovation, rupture, change, and the promise of new futures, while at the same time denying the possibility of an alternative account to that of modernism. How do we, as scholars of the contemporary, escape this double bind? Albrow is one of a rapidly growing number engaged in such an effort.

The modernist account of globalization is constructed in familiar categories: world government, world markets, world order, global culture, late modernity. For Albrow none of these are adequate. The issue is not their partial nature; any account of change is partial. It is, rather, that they carry too much of the modern past and too little of the difference we experience today. For Albrow, the modern age has finished. But history has not finished: a new age with its own dominant features and shape has taken over. But we can only recognize it in the pretheoretical, in people's experiences and reference points, not in philosophical or sociological treatises. The narrative of the theorists of modernity "can never permit us to enter a new age. . . . The future has to be a continuation of past trends," and postmodernist theorists—though willing to contemplate the end of an epoch—"cannot find a foundation for the new narrative" (p. 80).

Three propositions specify Albrow's effort. (This my reading rather than his schema.) First, a new age is upon us but we cannot as yet narrate it. It is characterized by our recognition of the globe as a material condition of finitude rather than a universal idea. Second, this new global age is not a necessary continuation of what preceded it—yet another step in the history of modernization. It is an accumulation of ruptures that have thrown us into another experiential mode—one that is marked by this finitude rather than by the notion of process, and hence potential, at the center of modernization. In this Albrow differs from other theorists working on the question of globalization, notably Anthony Giddens, for whom it is part of modernity. Finally, it is not that the global age challenges the axial ideas of modernity but rather that it signifies the disruption of the conditions that made axial ideas central.

These propositions are swimming in a vast disquisition about sociological theory, social philosophy, and the marking features of the global age. This is not a tight analytic development of the subject, but rather a set of lectures by a very learned sociologist intent on being followed by everyone in the room. The readability of the text is somewhat deceptive in that Albrow's arguments are based on erudite knowledge of several specialized literatures. But here he is intent on making it all terribly clear. I miss the density and pregnancy of a more scholarly, yes, tortured, treatment of the subject.

There is no analytics. This is what I miss the most and find the weakest part of this in many ways excellent book. At times, Albrow refers to ana-

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lytic categories that are inadequate for a specification of the global age. This is the case, for instance, with "system," not just national or micro systems but also world-system analysis. Albrow emphasizes that the conditions of the global age are not equivalent to global systems—and that the categories of *society* and *system* have never been as antithetical as they are today; indeed, he calls for the recovery of the social rather than the systemic and for a theoretical reelaboration of the category *society* as it currently enters into growing tension with systems such as the nation-state.

He recognizes the work of some scholars who have done analytic work on these questions: Leslie Sklair's research on institutional frames with a global operational base, or the research on global cities and the deconstruction of national territories they imply, as well as research on transnational forms of ethnicity and membership. But the author does not do the hard work of putting together the analytic elements that are being developed by a variety of scholars around these questions. I am not calling for quantitative modeling, just good analysis. For instance on the question of the nation-state, a central one in this book, there is new scholarship that is contributing important theoretical and methodological elements centered on the analytic uncoupling of terms taken as equivalent under modernism: national territory and the exclusive territoriality of the national state; extraterritorial jurisdiction and institutional denationalization; the formation of privatized forms of cross-border governance and international law. In the case of categories having to do with the local or the community, the new scholarship is contributing the analytic extrication of these terms from the presumed necessity of locational proximity; while we have probably always had localizations that are deterritorialized, and, in that sense, not centered on locational proximity, globalization has certainly multiplied their occurrence and made them part of the register of people's experience—from the transnational professional class to cross-border modes of membership. Albrow does posit the unavoidable indeterminacy of any analytic theory of globalization, but this is still a rather different matter from no analytics at all.

Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity. By T. K. Oommen. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1997. Pp. viii+270. $54.95.

Craig Calhoun
New York University

We have confused nationalism, ethnicity, and citizenship—and for that matter, state, class, and race—according to the distinguished Indian sociologist and former International Sociological Association (ISA) president, T. K. Oommen. We pay the price for this not only in weakened academic analyses but in bloody conflicts and political discrimination. *Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity* is an effort to sort out the "correct" definitions

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and relations among terms and to show some advantages of greater clarity.

Oommen's basic argument is that in some primordial beginning, peoplehood was based on the coincidence of territory and language. Peoples who sustain that connection constitute nations. Ethnicity arises when the link between culture and territory is broken—for example, by migration. Nationals are "insiders"; ethnics are "outsiders." Neither ethnicity nor nationality has any conceptual connection to states, within which membership is purely a matter of citizenship.

There is considerable wisdom in Oommen's argument that citizenship has the potential to create an arena of equality within which competing claims rooted in national and ethnic differences may be reconciled. His position is similar to Habermas's notion of constitutional patriotism. Unfortunately, however, instead of trying to explain why countries like Germany link citizenship to nationality, Oommen simply says that this is a conceptual mistake with negative normative consequences. More generally, Oommen sets out to prove that there is no such thing as a nation-state by showing (rightly) that even such seeming candidates as Great Britain, France, and Germany have not achieved perfect coincidence of nation and state. He does not take up the question of why the nation-state link organizes so much of political life and collective identity even while fitting cases imperfectly. Nor does he try to analyze nationalism or ethnic solidarity as projects or to consider the social organizational factors by which collective identity and social solidarity are maintained.

Oommen does helpfully point to "ethnification" as a process of defining some collectivities as outsiders and thereby making their cultural differences salient for political and economic discrimination. The reverse is "nationalization," which happens when people express an elective affinity for those of ostensible common ancestry, relocate to be with them, and bind acceptance as members of the nation. "Homogenization" programs try to make the people of a country fit a national pattern. All these phenomena are produced by the rupture of primordial fit between territory and speech community.

Oommen recurrently uses the term "authentic" to describe some claims to a territory, generally those that are older. He offers no consistent metric by length of occupancy. He sees the Ibo as outsiders and newcomers after several hundred years in what is now Nigeria, while the Ikale are insiders after the same length of time compared to the Urhobo, who came in the 19th century. Oommen never considers that there are no perfectly primordial peoples and so everybody's ancestors moved sometime. Though he notes in passing that people's identities may change over time, he gives that point no analytic weight, and offers no account of the different ways in which national identities may be constructed. Some identities last, he says, simply "because they struck a familiar chord . . . because they contain a primordial element" (p. 38). Oommen does recognize that sometimes two nations inhabit the same homeland and may fight over it when one gets the upper hand as nation and attempts to redefine the other as

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outsider—as, for example, Turks "ethnified" Armenians and ultimately produced their genocide. But he does not seem to see that the creation of sharp boundaries around national "homelands" is a distinctive feature of modern states, and thus that an understanding of nation cannot proceed, as he proposes, from the view that the state is irrelevant.

The nation-state may be a mythic ideal, but nationality is not simply neutral in the modern world (as Oommen wishes it might be) precisely because of the nationalist project of linking nations and states. This is obscured because Oommen does not distinguish clearly between the argument that a phenomenon—say defining nationality and citizenship in terms of religion—is bad or illegitimate, and the argument that it does not exist. Oomen tends to reason in categorical absolutes, not variables. Indeed, he thus argues against findings of statistically significant correlation on the basis that there are cases that do not fit the rule (pp. 196–97). Because race and religion are insufficient to define nations, Oomen says they are irrelevant rather than treating them as possible factors in a multivariate explanation. For that matter, territory and language might better be seen as important contributing factors rather than as a definition. To use the term *nation* to describe every territorially stable speech community makes it hopelessly general.

The book is illustrated with a wide range of examples and indeed benefits from the attempt to construct a truly global view of the problems in question. The examples are often plucked out of historical context, however, treated from a somewhat arbitrary range of (frequently dated) sources, and subjected to dubious interpretative summaries; this somewhat vitiates their value as support for the argument. Are we confident, thus, that Zionism is a matter of 2,500 years of yearning for an ancient homeland (p. 190) and not the product of a social movement in the context of the European flowering of nationalism? That Swahili was "rejected" as a national language (p. 194; a claim made with no mention of the country in question)? That Slovenian nationalism was not significantly rooted in economic grievances against the former Yugoslavia (p. 211)? Should we worry when British nationalism is addressed without reference to any of the recent historical work on the subject (such as that of Linda Colley), or the place of colored immigrants in Britain is considered without attention to any of the impressive range of recent sociological analyses (including those of Stuart Hall or Paul Gilroy)? Analyses of the relation of race to nation in Latin America have changed over time; Freyre is not the last word on Brazil. Yet Oomen cites no source from the last 20 years of active research.

Oommen relies a great deal on Walker Connor, Rupert Emerson, and Anthony Smith, though sometimes as straw men. But he never considers the influential arguments of Benedict Anderson, Rogers Brubaker, Partha Chatterjee, Liah Greenfeld, or Michael Mann. Ernest Gellner is cited but not recognizable, as Oommen claims Gellner held that "nation and class are interchangeable categories" (p. 206); Gellner's view was rather that nation and class are more likely to spark political mobilization when they

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coincide. Oommen summarizes what he says "anthropological research concludes" on the old question of whether ways of thought vary by level of social, economic, or cultural development by citing a 1911 work by Franz Boas, while failing to mention the equally prominent contemporary position of Lucien Levy-Bruhl and the numerous entries into the argument ever since.

Oommen's vision is humane: a world in which citizenship promotes equality of rights within states, while differences between "insider" and "outsider" are not allowed to become occasions for political exclusion, genocide, or coerced assimilation. Had all the inhabitants of Bosnia and their neighbors in Serbia and Croatia accepted the principle that they deserved equal citizenship in the Bosnian state regardless of their national, religious, or linguistic differences, tragedy would have been averted. But it is hard to believe that the reasons for the tragedy really lay primarily in conceptual confusion and "wrong labeling" as Oommen asserts (p. 80), rather than in various passions, interests, fears, and ambitions—including those that helped to motivate tendentious labels and identity claims.

Region, Religion, Caste, Gender, and Culture in Contemporary India. Edited by T. V. Sathyamurthy. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. xii+602. $45.00.

Gerald James Larson
Indiana University, Bloomington

In 1989, 1990, and 1991, the Ford Foundation sponsored a series of conferences in India entitled "The Terms of Political Discourse in India." The conferences were interdisciplinary, involving a variety of social science perspectives (history, sociology, economics, and political science) along with participation by a variety of activists (social workers, journalists, political activists, teachers, lawyers, etc.). By 1992, final draft essays were received from various participants in the conferences, and the essays were divided into four groupings for the four volumes in the series Social Change and Political Discourse in India: Structures of Power, Movements of Resistance. Volume 1 addresses issues of state power and polity. Volume 2 addresses issues of economic development (both industrial and agricultural). *Region, Religion, Caste, Gender, and Culture in Contemporary India* is volume 3. Volume 4 (forthcoming) will address issues of class formation and political change in postcolonial India.

The editor for the series, T. V. Sathyamurthy, nowhere explains (at least in vol. 3) why it has taken nearly a decade to publish these essays, especially insofar as they address issues that change from month to month, much less year to year. Contributors to this volume were invited to provide an update to their essays in June 1994, but even so, the updates are themselves seriously outdated in view of the actual publication date

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of 1996. Had these essays been largely on humanistic themes or even based on humanistic social science theorizing, the delay in publication, though to be regretted, would not have been necessarily harmful to the value of the collection. In this instance, however, inasmuch as the essays are empirically based and addressed to current concerns, it has to be noted at the outset of the review that the essays are seriously flawed because of their late appearance in print. Since 1994, the entire political structure of India has changed with the emergence of two new coalition governments (first, that of the Deve Gowda government and now, most recently, that of I. K. Gujral). Moreover, the older style leftist discourse of preliberalization social scientific theorizing (so evident in the current volume under review with its tedious reiteration of such clichés as "hegemony," "neocolonialism," "the colonial regime," etc.) has been largely superseded by a variety of younger and more original social scientists in India, and perhaps most important, the terms of debate regarding such issues as "religion," "secularism," "caste," "gender," and so forth have undergone significant changes. Put directly, the present collection of essays reads more than a little like last week's newspaper.

The late date of publication, of course, is hardly the fault of the 19 contributors to this volume, and there are some useful discussions in the collection that are worth noticing. As the title indicates, the collection is organized under five basic headings, namely, region, religion, caste, gender, and culture. The strongest essays are to be found in the areas of religion, caste, and gender. Sujata Patel's essay, "On the Discourse of Communalism" (pp. 145–79), makes the interesting and valid point that the discourse of nationalism-cum-secularism in postindependence India is itself a kind communalist discourse. Also, M. Hasan's essay, "The Changing Position of the Muslims and the Political Future of Secularism in India" (pp. 200–28), and A. Patnaik and K. S. R. V. S. Chalam's essay, "The Ideology and Politics of Hindutva" (pp. 252–80), contain some interesting observations about Hindu-Muslim tensions in contemporary India and make the important point that serious mistakes have been made on both sides of the religious divide in modern India. In the group of essays having to do with caste, D. L. Sheth argues in "Changing Terms of Elite Discourse: The Case of Reservation for 'OBCs' [Other Backward Castes]" (pp. 314–33) that the discourse of the political elite has shifted from a concern for political and social transformation (the early Nehruvian concern) to the more recent obsession with the maintenance of power and stability. Also noteworthy among the essays on caste is "The Anti-Caste Movement and the Discourse of Power" (pp. 334–54) by Gail Omvedt, primarily because of the excellent overview of the history of the Dalit (or untouchable) movements in 20th-century India. Among the essays on gender, Ilina Sen's "Women's Politics in India" (pp. 444–62) and Rajni Palriwala and Indu Agnihotri's "Tradition, the Family and the State: Politics of the Contemporary Women's Movement" (pp. 503–32) provide useful discussions of the history of the women's movement in India along with discussions of some of the pressing current issues such

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as the antidowry movement, the abuse of widows, and the victimization of women because of the absence of a uniform civil code in modern India.

The volume overall would have benefited from more precise editing. The introduction to the volume, though containing some useful background information, hardly warrants 63 printed pages. Similarly, the volume would have had more coherence and consistent quality with 10 or 12 carefully selected papers rather than the present rather disparate collection of 19. Finally, more precise editing would have produced a more economical book. The current price of $45 seems high even for a book published in the United States or Europe, much less a book for the India market.

Japanese Civilization: A Comparative View. By S. N. Eisenstadt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. Pp. xii+581. $39.95.

D. R. Howland
DePaul University

S. N. Eisenstadt's *Japanese Civilization: A Comparative View* is an extensive review of secondary literature in Japanese history and sociology; it revisits modernization theory in order to account for the "enigmatic" position of Japan among modern industrialized nations. Part 1, "Modern and Contemporary Japan," describes the "crystallization" of the modern Japanese state and society as a specific pattern of modernity; part 2, "Aspects of Japanese Historical Experience," describes Japan's unique development in comparison to Western Europe; and part 3, "The Framework of Japanese Historical Experience," links these characteristics of Japanese experience to the central structures of Japanese society and culture in order to distinguish Japan as a modern civilization. Unlike modernization theory of the 1960s, which prioritized social, economic, and political structures, Eisenstadt points to Japan's *cultural* program of modernity in explaining the success of Japan's modernization. This cultural program has sought to authenticate the spiritual essence of the Japanese people by reconstructing traditional symbols of collective identity and by incorporating as "traditional" new patterns of behavior, organization, and cultural activity. It has successfully avoided sharp confrontations between tradition and modernity (pp. 428–34).

In establishing the priority of culture in Japan's modernization, Eisenstadt enlists the concept of "Axial civilizations." Based on the examples of Christian Europe, Hindu India, and Confucian China (civilizations that produced the great world religions), "Axial" signifies civilization as religion—the basic ontological conceptions of a people transformed into a hegemonic premise of civilization and linked to geographical and political boundaries, collective identities and symbols, and so on. Eisenstadt observes that Japan is "the only non-Axial civilization to have had a contin-

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uous, autonomous . . . history up to and including modern times" (p. 13). It differs from "pre-Axial" patrimonial empires like Egypt in that it failed to develop territorial distinctions and elite specialization as it expanded; in turn, it differs from Axial civilizations in that the absence of elite specialization failed to produce radical breakthroughs in cultural orientations that might constitute new centers of tension between the mundane and the transcendental orders (p. 378). Accordingly, Eisenstadt notes the absence of a transcendental dimension or universal values in Japan's indigenous religion, Shinto, in the Meiji Restoration, and elsewhere. Indeed, we learn, inward-oriented Japan is the one great civilization to periodically "de-Axialize" and deny the putatively universal ideologies it once borrowed from Axial China or Europe (pp. 260, 307).

As a matter of course, *Japanese Civilization* encounters theoretical difficulties associated with modernization theory and essentialist definitions of civilization. Despite a caveat to the contrary (pp. 88–89), Eisenstadt's analysis remains grounded in Western development as normative. European political forms guide comparisons with the rise of the Meiji state, and European social history guides the comparison with Japanese social development—urbanization as a commercial development, for example (p. 179), or the Meiji Restoration as a modern revolution (pp. 264–65). Again, despite claims to the contrary (pp. 282, 311–15), Eisenstadt defines Japanese civilization as an abstracted essence, a "framework" rather than a process (p. 250–51). To stress "the continuity of the main components" (p. 313), he limits change to reconstructing symbols of collective identity and legitimizing new developments as traditional. The introduction of Buddhism and Confucianism or the challenges posed by peasant revolts and heterodox intellectual movements—all novel or resistant phenomena—are incorporable into the "crystallized ideology" of Japanese civilization.

But in asserting that Japanese civilization has endured largely unchallenged, Eisenstadt misses—for example—the long historical dialogue between China and Japan and the significant developments in Confucian discourse during the Tokugawa period (pp. 242–49). Would-be reformers, from Tokugawa Confucians through postwar constitutionalists, have critiqued authoritarian government and hereditary privilege in the name of "talent" and "conciliar government." By insisting that Japan lacks such universalistic values, Eisenstadt minimizes the pan-Asian ideology of the 1930s and 1940s, which depended on Japanese declarations of shared culture—not to mention other shared values over the past century: the international position of Japanese labor, the political left, and Japan's participation in world capitalism. In short, *Japanese Civilization* raises familiar questions; students and nonspecialists will find the book a thorough and useful survey of the secondary literature.

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Imagining Miami: Ethnic Politics in a Postmodern World. By Sheila L. Croucher. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997. Pp. x+235. $45.00 (cloth); $15.00 (paper).

Raymond A. Mohl
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Since midcentury, few American cities have changed as dramatically as Miami. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of Cuban exiles between 1959 and the 1990s gradually transformed metropolitan Miami, creating a Latin ambience and overlaying the traditional tourist economy with a newer business pattern oriented around hemispheric commerce. Later immigrant arrivals from Haiti, Nicaragua, and elsewhere in Central and South America added to the city's multicultural mix of blacks, whites, Jews, and Cubans. The creation of the new Miami did not come free of cost: race riots, ethnic rivalries, serious drug and crime problems, battles over immigration and language use, and a deeply divisive political culture shaped national and international images of the South Florida metropolis. In the course of 20th-century change, Miami was no longer perceived as the "magic city," as early boosters had proclaimed, but had become a "paradise lost," as *Time* magazine asserted in 1981.

Sheila Croucher's *Imagining Miami* is not a study of how and why Miami has changed since the 1960s. Rather, it is an analysis of a succession of socially and politically constructed images of Miami. It focuses on who created these competing and contested images and why, and it asks what these images reveal about the city's social and political life. As Croucher puts it, "The fluctuating images that have characterized Miami over the past fifty years are used not only as descriptive tools but also to provide insight into the nature and complexity of social and political reality."

Following a long background chapter summarizing Miami's growth and change to about 1960, Croucher moves on to the heart of the book—the discussion of "claims-making" activity, as different groups in the city began actively creating competing images of Miami. For instance, one chapter explores the creation and elaboration of the "displacement theory," which contended that the arrival of the Cubans in the 1960s and after displaced blacks in the local economy as the newcomers took low-skill, low-pay jobs. According to Croucher, this "immigrant takeover" discourse had several sources. Black leaders were annoyed by the heavy federal support for the Cuban refugees and concerned that the Cubans were moving up the economic ladder more quickly than African-Americans. The white (or Anglo) power structure in Miami helped to create this displacement argument, as well; it permitted the white power structure to pressure the federal government to curb further Cuban immigration and to provide greater financial support for local programs assisting the Cubans; it also permitted them to avoid doing anything about black grievances. Croucher also suggests that the Anglo political and business elite

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found the displacement theory useful because it kept the blacks and the Hispanics bickering and divided and thus undermined ethnic coalitions that might challenge establishment power. The Cubans, however, disputed the displacement thesis, claiming instead that they took jobs no Americans would take, that they created their own ethnic "enclave" economy that absorbed later arrivals, and that they were not responsible for the racism and discrimination that had kept African-Americans at the bottom of the economic pile.

A second major claims-making discourse emphasized the uniqueness of the Cuban immigrant experience in South Florida. The Cubans, it was argued, have been the most successful immigrant group in American history; they came with a strong work ethic, they vigorously opposed communism in the Cold War era, and they displayed an entrepreneurialism that reinvigorated Miami's declining tourist economy. The success of the Cuban success story, Croucher contends, can be attributed to the repetition of this positive image of the Cubans by several self-interested groups. Obviously, the Cubans themselves staked out their claim to favored treatment, and they have done so effectively over almost 40 years. Similarly, the federal government constantly asserted the special status of the Cubans as exiles from a communist dictatorship—as freedom fighters who deserved American gratitude. The federal government, of course, was interested in using the Cubans for propaganda purposes during the Cold War against Fidel Castro. Finally, Miami's business elite looked favorably on the entrepreneurial Cubans—the bankers, lawyers, builders, real estate developers, international businessmen, and other entrepreneurs—who had helped make Miami the "capital of Latin America." Send us thousands more like them, one Anglo businessmen proclaimed, an apparent testament to the story of the Cubans' entrepreneurial success.

A third, and final, image-making discourse focused on the degree to which symbolic ethnic conflict in Miami takes place in an increasingly global context. Croucher uses the uproar caused by the visit of Nelson Mandela to Miami in 1990 to make this point. In Miami to speak at a union convention, Mandela was snubbed by Miami area municipalities, which normally recognized visiting digniaries with an official welcome and the symbolic "key" to the city. The problem was that Mandela had publicly praised both Castro and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, thanking them for their long support for the cause of black South Africa. Consequently, Miami politicos kept their distance, hoping thereby not to offend local Cubans and Jews, both powerful voting blocs in the Miami area. However, blacks were outraged and soon mobilized a three-year black convention boycott of Miami area hotels. Croucher contends that this ethnic dispute was played out in the context of Miami's emerging role as an "international" or "global" city. According to this analysis, events in South Africa, Israel, Cuba, or Haiti generate symbolic ethnic discourses in Miami.

Croucher has done a good job of elaborating the several different competing ethnic discourses in the Miami area. Few would argue with her

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basic point that such claims and images are socially and politically constructed. However, Croucher makes grandiose claims for her theoretical framework, which she says makes it possible to comprehend the "dimensions of power and urban politics that tend to be otherwise obscured by conventional frameworks" (p. 3). I remain unconvinced of this claim of methodological or theoretical superiority. Moreover, although asserting her objectivity as a social scientist, Croucher lets her opinions filter into the text. For instance, she apparently disagrees with the displacement thesis, claiming that there is no evidence to support it. If she dug a little deeper in traditional archival sources (Florida state archives, NAACP papers, papers of political leaders such as Florida Senator George A. Smathers), such evidence might have been found. If blacks were not displaced from the local job market in the 1960s, for example, how is it that Cubans dominated the service jobs in the tourist industry by 1970, whereas most of those jobs had been held by blacks in 1960?

The book has other problems, as well. The text is heavily burdened with postmodernist jargon, which often clutters the writing. Perhaps some readers will understand what Croucher means when she writes that Miami has become a "crash site" in the new global economy. Her first chapter laying out her methodology and theory is rambling, confusing, and tedious. An appendix describes her original research—60 interviews with local politicians, attorneys, business people, journalists, elected officials, and so on, people she says "were most cognizant of ethnic relations in Miami" (p. 201). Why ordinary people—say, black workers displaced from jobs by Cubans—would not be "cognizant" of ethnic relations is not explained. Croucher's second chapter presenting historical background on South Florida and Miami is filled with errors of fact. A few examples: Spanish explorers did not encounter Seminole Indians on their arrival in Florida, but the earlier Timucuans—the Seminoles came 200 years later; blacks had not achieved "significant civil rights gains" in Dade County by midcentury; Miami had been a tourist destination since early in the 20th century, so how could it have a "fledgling tourist industry" in the 1970s? Those familiar with Miami history will be surprised to see Luther L. Brooks identified as a "community leader." For over 30 years, the white Brooks was black Miami's biggest slumlord; he headed the Bonded Collection Agency, which collected weekly rents on over 10,000 slum housing units. Croucher implies that José Martí organized Cuba's independence struggle from Miami, which is unlikely, since Martí died fighting in Cuba in 1895, one year before Miami was founded as a city. In its focus on image making in modern Miami, this book has much to recommend it. However, it also has numerous shortcomings.

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Ethnic Los Angeles. Edited by Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996. Pp. xiv+497. $45.00 (cloth); $24.95 (paper).

William Alonso
Harvard University

Ethnic Los Angeles is an important book, the most comprehensive look at the ethnic landscape of an urban region this reviewer knows. It is a fine regional complement to most comparable studies, which tend to have an East Coast or Chicago tilt. Less important, but instructively, it contains a wondrous bestiary of late 20th-century sociological statistical approaches: not only the by-now familiar index of dissimilarity, but also odds ratios for intermarriages, exposure/isolation index, industrial and occupational niches, and entropy measures.

It is also a redoubtable book, over 500 pages in all. Aside from front and end matter, it consists of 15 original chapters by 21 authors, all of them currently or formerly associated with the University of California, Los Angeles. It includes a serviceable index. Notes are grouped at the end of each chapter (which produces for the assiduous reader the usual annoyance of page marking and page flipping).

In the introductory chapter, editors Waldinger and Bozorgmehr provide an overview of the volume's approach, which is that different groups may and will follow a variety of paths of adaptation to a region undergoing dynamic economic change. They reject both the model of universal progressive assimilation and the model of immigrant cultures preserved in amber forever. Then they lay out the general plan: a first group of thematic essays (historical perspective, changes in the composition of the population, residential patterns, language, labor markets, self-employment, and ethnicity and gender in manufacturing employment) and a second group of essays dedicated to particular groups (Chicanos, Central Americans, Asians, Middle Easterners, African-Americans, Jews/Russians, and Anglos). A few pages make for a conclusion.

Inevitably there is some duplication and redundancy among the essays but not too much. By far the greater part of the materials are statistical and demographic analyses, with the 1990 census Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) as the principal data source. Historical, political, cultural, and ethnographic perspectives are lightly touched upon (Cheng and Yang's opening pages on Asians and those of Bozorgmehr et al. on Middle Easterners are exceptions). One might have wished for a richer treatment of certain topics, particularly in those areas where the traditional racial/ethnic boundaries are breaking down, such as the interethnic dynamics of street gangs or the place in Angeleno society of mixed Asian-white people. The almost exclusive reliance on census data precludes this, since of necessity the census deals with sharply bounded (existentialist) categories. Still, one must not criticize a book for what it does not set out to do, and what this book does is admirable.

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Who can use this book? It seems to me that the potential users are (1) those who want themselves or their students to know and understand Los Angeles; (2) those who are interested in particular ethnic groups, especially those seldom covered in the literature (e.g., Middle Easterners, Central Americans); (3) teachers in other parts of the United States who may want to convey to students some of the diversity of the current American experience; (4) graduate students, as an exemplar of measurement and mapping techniques. (It is a pity that the software packages used are not cited because, although none of the statistical methods are particularly abstruse, without prepackaged software they become essentially inaccessible to most researchers.)

I will conclude with a final comment. Many of the essays stress the economic difficulties that the Los Angeles region experienced in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as defense cutbacks and other structural changes cut off what had seemed a permanent boom. They draw from this largely pessimistic implications for the economic and social advancement of disadvantaged minorities. But most recent reports on the greater Los Angeles economy seem to say that the heavy blows have been absorbed and that the economy has recovered its health and become much more diversified, particularly in certain forms of software, international trade, finance, and other sectors that elude standard industrial classifications. What may this mean for the economic well-being or sociocultural evolution of particular groups? What role have ethnic groups played in this transformation? This reviewer has not a clue but draws a lesson: when studying structural change, while it is important to be as up-to-date as possible, one should respect the role of cyclical contingency and not confuse recent developments with unavoidable fate.

The City: Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century. Edited by Allen J. Scott and Edward W. Soja. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xii+483. $40.00.

Mark Baldassare
University of California, Irvine

An edited volume of scholarly work on the Los Angeles region is long overdue. There is no urban region in the United States today that is as rich and dynamic as Los Angeles. In recent decades, it has been the site of rapid population growth, historic levels of immigration from Central America and Asia, and dramatic racial and ethnic change. The economy went though a period of rapid job expansion in the 1980s followed by a severe recession in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War. The housing market has responded with boom and bust cycles. Residents of the region routinely face severe traffic congestion and the worst air pollution in the nation. Los Angeles has also been the site of natural disasters, such as the Northridge earthquake, and man-made disasters, such as the civil

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unrest in South Central. Yet, the climate, beaches, jobs, and amenities continue to attract both tourists and permanent residents from around the globe.

The image of Los Angeles is shaped by the media and entertainment industries headquartered in the region. Urban scholars have been slow in offering a competing vision. Against this backdrop, there have been rumors of the emergence of a "Los Angeles school." The publication of Scott and Soja's *The City* provides some evidence that scholarly studies of this region are on the fast track. The book's title is reminiscent of the Chicago school and the classic work by Park, Burgess, and McKenzie. Any comparisons end there. This is not a book that offers a unifying theory to comprehend the Los Angeles area. The editors admit at the outset that their book "is not intended to be a final substantive statement about Los Angeles. Instead, our aim is to whet the appetite and stimulate the quest for a more systematic and insightful understanding of the issues and problems raised" (p. ix). Their goal is accomplished both because of what their authors have to contribute as well as what is not covered in this edited volume.

The City contains 14 chapters written by 15 authors in the Los Angeles area. Ten of the scholars are from University of California, Los Angeles, two are from the University of Southern California, and three are from other institutions. Six of the authors are from academic departments of urban planning, three are from geography, two are from architecture, one is from sociology, and one from political science. The composition of the authors says a lot about the perspectives that are dominant in this book. There is an emphasis on spatial analysis and the physical environment, though clearly from a postmodern view rather than that of urban ecology. One wishes that a more diverse pool of scholars had been commissioned for this work. The book would have benefited from the insights of anthropology, economics, demography, social psychology, and ethnic studies. Also, the authors' locations result in too much of a city focus and some superficial analyses of the outlying regions.

The first chapter is an introduction by the two editors and offers a historical overview and some comments on contemporary planning and politics. This is interesting, but a discussion of overarching themes or the book's organization is much needed. What follows are many authors, each providing a different "slice" of Los Angeles. One author, Rocco, notes, "Los Angeles is extremely fragmented or extremely diverse, depending on one's perspective or ideology. What is clear, even to the casual observer, is that there is more than one Los Angeles" (p. 366). Similar to the region that is studied, this book offers a sprawling and fragmented view of Los Angeles. The chapters that follow offer a range of unrelated topics and interests. These include "Hetero-Architecture and the L.A. School," "Bounding and Binding Metropolitan Space," "L.A. as Design Product," and "How Eden Lost Its Garden." In this book, the reader will find some excellent pieces written at the highest level of scholarship. The chapter on the evolution of transportation by Marty Wachs offers new

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insights on a vital and important issue. The chapter on homelessness by Jennifer Wolch is a moving piece about the reasons for poverty and despair amid all the wealth and glitz. Allen Scott's chapter on the high technology industry looks at the unique nature of economic growth and urban form in the region. The chapters on the African-American and Latino experiences are also of importance, yet an opportunity is missed by not delving further into the issues of immigration and race ethnic relations. For instance, the book offers little in the way of understanding the civil unrest that engulfed Los Angeles in 1992.

In the words of coeditor Soja in the final chapter, "All that can be said in closing is that Los Angeles, as always, is worth watching" (p. 460). That is true, and scholars everywhere who are seeking some glimpses into the urban future will find *The City* essential reading.

Nationalism and Literature: The Politics of Culture in Canada and the United States. By Sarah M. Corse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. xii+213. $54.95 (cloth); $17.95 (paper).

Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson
Columbia University

The first Canadian novel I read confronted me with situations that I had thought of as indigenously American, which left me with a vague feeling of cultural displacement. In *Nationalism and Literature* Sarah Corse scrutinizes the bases for this kind of identification through the ways in which certain texts form what can be construed as a national symbolic space. (This space also includes similar cultural products, from films to national anthems, and it surely fits Corse's argument that the vast "American" wheat fields in my Canadian novel were familiar largely from novels, movies, and "America the Beautiful.")

Taking (somewhat laborious) exception to the "reflection thesis" that assigns "national character" to innate cultural characteristics and particular cultural products, Corse sets up an extended confrontation between the national literatures and literary fields of (anglophone) Canada and the United States. Chosen for their obvious similarities, these countries also, as Corse demonstrates through their literatures, diverge in interesting, and sometimes unexpected, ways. Since the very concept of a national literature is problematic, this is where she starts. Because a canon is by definition exclusionary, a "national literature" can only be the end product of a rigorous, if largely unconcerted, process of deciding what fits "the nation" and what does not.

This careful study argues that the elaboration of a canon of works that are (sooner, but more often later) taken as "representative" of the nation occurs during periods of intense nation building. Given the different political developments (early vs. much later and incomplete severance from Britain), the two canons, which Corse determines through university

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course syllabi, differ on a number of counts. They differ most in the period of formation: in contrast to the 10 "top" American novels, which were published from the 1850s to the 1930s, the comparable Canadian works range from 1904 to 1976, with five of the 10 novels written after 1964. (Corse also makes astute observations concerning the larger sample from which the core 20 novels were drawn.) The Canadian canon has substantially more works by women, another function of its later development. In both cases, it is a question of differentiation from a relevant "other," Great Britain for the earlier Americans, often the United States for the later Canadians, writing for the most part well after the American canon is set. While the explanation of these and other parameters is convincing, the analysis of the "meaning" of the core novels is less so, partly because Corse is caught between making interpretive sense of the works and following her code sheet (appendix D) concerned with setting, family structure, interpersonal conflict, and so forth. As she somewhat reluctantly recognizes, this is precisely the kind of uncontrolled interpretation that a sociological study was supposed to avoid. That interpretation is not "wrong," but it is not, in the event, especially satisfying, especially as the national differences in question may well owe more to the times of composition than Corse allows.

The canon takes on its full significance, however, in the context of two other types of works, the winners of the top literary prizes and the best-sellers, both taken for 1978 to 1987. Although differences persist, and Corse is attentive to these, distinctiveness diminishes as one moves from canonical to contemporary elite to popular literature. Working off Pierre Bourdieu's dual market model, Corse demonstrates that the elite self-consciousness responsible for the national canon has all but disappeared for the best-sellers. Moreover, the American and Canadian samples coincide to a remarkable degree, with American authors accounting for the lion's share of authors and novels. In contrast to the distinction required for canonical works and, to a lesser degree, prize winners, best-sellers are not national.

Corse does not deal with consumption, but even within the production model, the analysis could be usefully extended. Regionalism is one factor that should be taken more fully into account. Not only can several of the American canonical novels be considered regional as well as national, the continuing division of anglophone from francophone Canada, discussed in some detail, creates a permanent fissure in any putative national identity elaborated through works written exclusively in English. No French-Canadian work appears on any of the lists. Given the rapid translation of blockbuster novels, ascertaining overlap in best-sellers across linguistic communities in Canada would further test Corse's contention that the broader the audience, the less national distinctiveness. Is best-sellerdom indicative of literary globalization or is the world buying America through Stephen King and his peers?

Like any thoughtful study, *Nationalism and Literature* raises more questions than it answers. How far, Corse asks in her conclusion, does

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this model of cultural nation building apply to more recent nations in an increasingly postnational world? Not the least of its virtues is the confirmation that literary sociology can engage sociological questions of very different orders, from nation building to cultural consumption.

Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction. Edited by David Forgacs and Robert Lumley. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. xv+368. $75.00 (cloth); $19.95 (paper).

Mabel Berezin
University of California, Los Angeles

Twentieth-century Italy is extraordinarily interesting, yet scholarly monographs as a gauge of social and political relevance suggest that Italy lost importance sometime in the 16th century. Works on modern and contemporary Italy appear as poor second cousins to Italian Renaissance studies, as well as more prestigious venues of European studies such as Germany, France, Scandinavia, and recently, Eastern Europe. But Italy is a major modern industrial nation that has coped, albeit in idiosyncratic manner, with the same problems as other modern nation-states—fascism and socialism in the early 20th century and, today, immigration, a resurgent right, problems of citizenship, and a declining welfare state. Robert Putnam's study of Italian regional government (*Making Democracy Work* [Princeton, 1993]), which politicians as well as scholars have hailed as a model for contemporary democratic practice, has begun to call into question the myth of Italian exceptionalism.

In a similar vein, *Italian Cultural Studies,* edited by David Forgacs and Robert Lumley, prolific British historians of contemporary Italian culture, seeks to contribute to evolving academic perceptions of Italy. The stated purpose of this anthology of 18 original essays is to bring "cultural studies" to Italy. Cultural studies has taken off in Britain, its home turf, and has migrated to the United States—the "English-speaking world," as Forgacs and Lumley note in their first paragraph—but has been of little interest in Italy where "culture" is equated with high culture and is relegated to literature and art history departments. The editors attribute the Italian emphasis upon "culture" with a capital "C" to the valorization of print culture in a country that, until recently, had some of the highest rates of illiteracy in Western Europe, to the organization of intellectual life in which only the elites constituted a reading community, and to the interplay of Catholic and Communist cultures, which controlled what became part of the public sphere.

Forgacs and Lumley assembled a group of 20 scholars, mostly historians and professors of "Italian studies" in Britain and Italy, to address diverse cultural topics. Pursuing the postmodern predilection for spatial metaphors, the editors organized the book in four sections: Geographies, Identities, Media, and, presumably borrowing from Raymond Williams,

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Culture and Society. Given the sharp and enduring schism between the north and south of Italy, this schema works well for the first two sections, which link political identities to the variegated cultural and social landscapes that cultivated them. The schema breaks down in the last two sections, where the authors discuss the more homogenized Italian mass media culture of the postwar era.

Essays in "Geographies" range from discussions of Italy as a weak nation-state to reviews of anthropological approaches to Italian studies to elaborations of Italy's linguistic variety. Sixty percent of Italians still speak a dialect, and 14% speak one exclusively (p. 95)—making textual forms of communication an ongoing problem. Eve's essay on political corruption provides a useful summary of the events leading up to *tangentopoli,* the massive crime exposé that toppled postwar political arrangements between 1992 and 1994. "Images of the South" is a lucid, if brief, account of how scientific reports from the North coupled with a degree of southern resistance served to produce a narrative of the South as corrupt and lazy, which has proven hard to shake. Dickie's "Imagined Italies" applies current theories of nationalism to Italy and argues that if all nation-states are "imagined," then Italy, despite its fragmentation, is no weaker than any of the others.

"Identities" offers a comprehensive guide to the cultural forces that have shaped and continued to shape Italian political and social life and, in my view, is the most sociologically compelling section of the anthology. Parker's chapter "Political Identities" shows how strong party identities precluded the development of national identity in Italy. Pratt's discussion of "Catholic Culture" coupled with Passerini's "Gender Relations" summarize the important legislation on divorce, abortion, and gender equality in the postwar period and demonstrate the role that the Catholic Church played in shaping family policy if not practice. For example, despite organized Catholic and Christian Democratic opposition, referendums to repeal both divorce and abortion laws failed (p. 140). Maher's essay on immigration as a new phenomenon in Italy not only provides data on incoming groups but offers a lively anthropological discussion of the evolution of "otherness" or "marked groups." Gypsies, southerners, and Jews can remain more outcast in Italy than North Africans or Filipinos whom Italians view benignly as "extracommunitarians."

In a country that had combined high rates of illiteracy and prevalence of dialect, it is not surprising that newspapers are local venues and television is a very popular medium. The section on "Media" provides useful summary articles on major journalistic outlets as well as elaborates the peculiarities of Italian public television. The latter is particularly important given the political success of Silvio Berlusconi—the largest owner of private television in Italy—and his role in the political scandals of the past few years. The cinema essay shows how American notions of "stars" and stories were Italianized in the postwar period—producing among other things the "spaghetti western." The last section, "Culture and Society," is somewhat eclectic. The articles on popular music and the star

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system are intriguing, and it is interesting, if not surprising, to learn that according to UNESCO, "50 per cent of world's artistic heritage sites are located in Italy" (p. 300).

Forgacs's essay on cultural consumption could have pulled many of the anthology's diverse strands together if he had discussed in a systematic way what happens to a society that suddenly has the power to consume. This criticism points to a central weakness of the book. The essays are too short, and there are somewhat too many of them. They are long on information, much of it useful, and short on analysis. This is, in part, because Forgacs and Lumley organized the book as a textbook. Each section has a summary introduction by the editors, and each author contributes a selected reading section at the end in addition to a bibliography. In addition, there are little exercises at the end of the sections that analyze different cultural objects. For example, at the end of the section on identities, Pratt analyzes two Catholic publicity posters, and at the end of the section on media Wagstaff analyzes images from the film, *The Bicycle Thief,* and Lumley analyzes political cartoons.

In short, specialists will find the essays somewhat predictable but, for those unfamiliar with contemporary Italy, this is a lucid and lively introduction. A concluding chapter that wrapped it all up would have gone a long way toward concretizing what is sociologically interesting, compelling, and important in Italy today. The collection as it stands whets the appetite but leaves the uninitiated reader supplying many of the crucial social, cultural, and political links.

The collection as a whole raises a broader question about the portability of cultural studies as an academic enterprise. Cultural studies as it originated in England was more than just an interdisciplinary approach to the study of culture. It was a way for the culturally, socially, and politically disenfranchised to valorize their cultural practices and to show how forms and rites of power created mental categories that enforced domination. The great irony here is that the Italian political philosopher Antonio Gramsci's (barely mentioned in the anthology) concept of "hegemony" is and was a central trope of cultural studies. Forgacs himself is a leading translator and editor of Gramsci's work in English.

Can it be that cultural studies does not travel well out of the English-speaking world or is there a sociological lesson that we can draw from all this? Cultural studies depends on giving voice to otherness, but it also depends on what Gramsci would describe as a class of organic intellectuals (think of Stuart Hall) to give voice to that otherness. The closest thing we have in the anthology is the discussion of Italian feminism and the women's voices and literature that it generated. But while Italian feminists were "other" as to gender, their class background, for the most part, suggests that they were hardly part of the disenfranchised masses. Italian, French, or whatever, cultural studies will emerge when an intellectual voice of the other, whether immigrants, southerners, or workers, emerges, that does not reject its history but articulates it. In the meanwhile, For-

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gacs and Lumley have given us lively cultural history—and that is not such a bad thing.

Problematics of Sociology: The Georg Simmel Lectures, 1995. By Neil J. Smelser. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xii+111. $19.95.

Alan Sica
Pennsylvania State University

Neil Smelser's professional life over the last 40 years coincides with the startling rise and uncertain future of sociology in the United States. Born in 1930, he studied with Parsons at Harvard, then took an Oxford master's (1959) after a Harvard doctorate (1958), arriving at Berkeley—so the lore holds—as a tenured associate professor at 28 years of age. While 26 and still a graduate student, he and Parsons published *Economy and Society* (not to be confused with the work of an earlier German, who was also precocious), followed in 1959 by *Social Change in the Industrial Revolution* (still a favorite among Smelserites), and three years later, at 32, his *Theory of Collective Behavior,* which was widely used and cited as a scholarly textbook in the 1960s. Had Smelser died then, presumably from exhaustion, his reputation as a creative sociologist of the functionalist stripe would have been well earned.

But he endured—through Berkeley's most raucous period, the "de-Parsonization" of theory, and the shattering of functionalism as the general explanatory tool he and his teacher had proposed. Scrutinizing an outline of Smelser's subsequent career, both as international social science promoter and as author and editor, could fill much of an evening. If there is someone still hard at work who better represents what now seems to be American sociology's "golden age" (aside from Merton, who is 20 years older), who might it be? Therefore, one must greet this brief meditation on sociology's condition with attention and thanks, not only for its author's usual clarity and intelligence, but because, having reached the stage of *éminence grise,* Smelser is poised to come clean about sociology's current delusions in areas of work he knows best. And given his continued impact on the field and his dedication to its healthy future, it seems wise to pay him heed—as the experienced voice of a more confident time in the discipline's past.

The book's four chapters correspond to lectures delivered in May and June 1995 at Humboldt University and cover, respectively, sociology's micro, meso, macro, and global dimensions. Naturally, this way of dividing up the discipline and the social world, even in a wilily heuristic fashion, contradicts noisy postmodern objections. These hold that sociology can no longer conduct business as usual now that cyberspace has putatively become more important to the world's richer citizens than the "so-

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cial" space of the kind typical of Parsons's environment 40 years ago. Smelser lightly reviews what has been going on within certain subfields over the last decade or two, and most of what he says will not shock those who have also been on the sociological scene. It is the more junior guild members who might find his recitation most intriguing and his usefully undogmatic way of organizing the recent history of the discipline helpful as they plan the field's next moves.

If there is a new theoretical twist to this latest in Smelser's long line of books, it revolves around what in Weber's time was known as the "irrationality problem" and what Smelser prefers to name the "nonrational" or "ambiguous" (as in his 1997 ASA presidential address). For a scholar who began his career carefully attending to the fine points of marginal utility theory as taught in England, and who tried as a graduate student to bring Parsonsian functionalism "up to speed" on the economic plane, it is an extraordinary recantation of First Principles to observe that "this family of tendencies in the social sciences [the trend toward rationalist psychology and rational control] . . . has continued apace in the late twentieth century, despite the evident vitality of the nonrational in the postmodern world, which appears in new versions of alienation and disenchantment, mental disorders, conflict, violence, and a resurgence of primordialism in group attachments and political life" (pp. 22, 19). Smelser wishes to "suggest a corrective to the individualistic, rational approach" that has so entranced students of social movements, culture, family studies, and other sociological zones of research for the last 15 years or more.

It seems a cardinal has noticed that the foundation of the Vatican is weakening and, having reached a senior position in the College, can now risk saying as much. Once committed to this rectification of received wisdom, he does not restrain himself: "All of us are intellectuals and trained professionals, and the major institutional commitment in those universities and colleges in which we have been formed is still to the pursuit of the truth, which means the pursuit of the rational. Especially in the late twentieth century, when the nonrational impulses I have documented are in full sway, we are still prone to interpret the world in our own rationalist image. It would behoove us to engage in a campaign of self-examination to recognize and perhaps break ourselves of that tendency" (p. 45). A fitting beginning to this campaign of self-scrutiny might entail assigning Smelser's book to graduate students and others still capable of curiosity. Then we might begin to grasp what is going on in social phenomena which "possess elements that are not readily understandable, or if understandable only by stretching . . . our dominant conceptions of rationality. . . . Does it not strike you as odd—as it strikes me—that we as social scientists interested in social movements should, in the late twentieth century, be so preoccupied with the rational aspects of social movements, precisely when the nonrational elements are so self-evident?" (pp. 45–46). Wise words from an old pro.

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The Mark of the Social: Discovery or Invention? Edited by John D. Greenwood. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1997. Pp. 279. $62.50 (cloth); $24.95 (paper).

Heinz-Günter Vester
Universität Würzburg

Although the social sciences have a tradition spanning a century, the nature of the social is not fully explored. Is the mark of the social to be discovered in its given properties, or is the social just what so-called social sciences decide to invent? The contributions to *The Mark of the Social,* edited and introduced by John D. Greenwood, cover a wide range of issues connected to this question. Authors from several fields (philosophy, psychology, social anthropology, economics, and sociology) are represented.

Since Émile Durkheim's definition of *faits sociaux,* attempts at figuring out the properties of the social are interwoven with methodological issues: How can one speak of the social, and what transforms this discussion into scientific discourse? That the social is constructed, both in the context of social theory and in everyday practice, is stated in Rom Harré's and Kenneth J. Gergen's articles. They also make clear that reducing the mark of the social to individual activity would be a misunderstanding of constructionism. The character of the social is relational—that is, in Gergen's terms, grounded in relational engagement, polyphonic expression, and infinite conversation. Not to see that "every act is actually a joint action" (Harré, p. 207) would be to surrender to individualism.

Margaret Gilbert appears to be tempted by an ontology of subjectivity, when, in her chapter, "Concerning Sociality," she conceptualizes "plural subjects," which does not contribute much to a clearer conception of the social. Similarly, Walter L. Wallace's focus on the classification of social phenomena does not yield much insight. An even more ambitious ontology is attempted by Scott Gordon, who asks, "How Many Kinds of Things Are There in the World?" Although the title of Peter T. Manicas's "Social Explanation" might suggest some guidelines for the exploration of the social, Manicas's intentions are more modest. He tries to prove that a recent Chicago study on crime simply asks the wrong questions.

Paul F. Secord outlines the mark of the social by summarizing how various paradigms in the social sciences have conceptualized the social. However, Secord's integration of these views, resulting in the statement that "the mark of the social is its socially constituted form" (p. 78) has a somewhat tautological flavor. Disappointing is Joseph Margolis's philosophical analysis of "The Meaning of 'Social,' " which culminates in the amazing wisdom that "the social is causally effective through the agency of selves, but effective agency is itself collectively structured" (p. 195). That the social is relational is the point brought home by Tim Ingold's "Life beyond the Edge of Nature?" in which he attempts "to re-embed these relationships within the continuum of organic life" (p. 250).

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In contrast to some of the contributions with a rhetorical or even tautological character, Jonathan H. Turner's "The Nature and Dynamics of 'The Social' among Humans" is well-structured, clear, and informative. His classificatory scheme of the social is comprehensive. Being rooted in biological evolution, sociality is described as a complex of processes out of which cognitive and emotional capacities, channels, and mechanisms emerge. Turner's outline of the social is constructive and helpful as it integrates well-known sociological concepts into a broader evolutionary, nonreductionist framework. Moreover, Turner stresses the point—sometimes forgotten in the social sciences—that sociality is not only a series of cognition but also a combination of emotions. The "feeling part" of the social, the "embodiment of society" are further analyzed in Lloyd E. Sanderland's instructive article, "The Body and the Social." Sanderland demonstrates that our ideas of society are rooted in bodily sensations and body-related symbols.

Probably none of the contributors would deny that the social is marked in historical processes. However, in this collection of theoretically grounded and sophisticated texts one misses more concrete descriptions of sociality in specific sociohistorical contexts. Following Jean Baudrillard, Raymond L. M. Lee's final article, "The Reversible Imaginary: Baudrillard and the End of the Social," deconstructs the social as an outcome of modernity. If we experience a crisis of modernity, we might wonder whether social theory and its search for the mark of the social have come to an end.

Given that the social is anchored in the body and in emotions, biology, and evolution, as some of the contributions state, declarations of the end of the social would be premature. *The Mark of the Social* offers food for thought—a mixture of some fresh ideas and sociological common sense—for all those who are still interested in the discovery of the social.

The Trouble with Evil: Social Control at the Edge of Morality. By Edwin M. Lemert. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997. Pp. ix+185. $16.95.

Troy Duster
University of California, Berkeley

From the early 1950s through the middle of this decade, Edwin Lemert was one of the central figures in the theoretical developments of the sociology of deviance. Along with a half dozen or so scholars that included John Kitsuse and Aaron Cicourel, Lemert was responsible for creating and developing the "societal reaction" (or sometimes called "labeling") theory of deviance. Since one of the central methodological underpinnings of that school emphasized the study of the reactions of key members and institutions to contested and highly variable definitions of deviance, it will seem odd to the *cognoscenti* that Lemert's last work focuses so

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intensely on the most normative of concepts, evil. Indeed, there is more than a little irony in the book's title.

The "trouble" with evil has to do with an epistemological conundrum highlighted by what is now called "standpoint theory." Lemert struggles with a "sense of evil" and tries to circumnavigate the knotty problem of defining it. Indeed, he never quite defines evil, but instead employs a Blumerian version of a "sensitizing concept." (The closest that he gets to a definition is his characterization of witchery among the Azande of the Southern Sudan as a "prototype of evil"—which is planned harm. The Melanesian sorcerer is said to have practiced unmitigated evil; see p. 146.)

That alone would not be much of a problem if he resolved the question of whether he is after (*a*) what others characterize as evil, or (*b*) some "essentialist" version of evil that cuts across human social and cultural experience. At certain points, he does appear to strategically adopt a labeling approach to evil, as when he speaks primarily of the "effective imputation of evil" (p. 21). He gets us started on a wide-ranging and somewhat free-wheeling journey through the literature—beginning with the formulation that all humans, and all societies, have a capacity for evil or for ignoring its practices (p. 5). On the other hand, he is critical of the attempt to "humanize evil" (there but for the grace of God go all humans) with the statement: "They [other social analysts of evil] humanize *that which has to be dehumanized* to be evil" (p. 7; my emphasis). Throughout the manuscript, he wavers and remains ambiguous and ambivalent as to whether by this he means "in order to be treated as evil" or some putative cross-culturally applicable notion of evil.

The book has a grand scope that covers an impressive range of literature. Lemert displays a rare level of erudition across a number of fields, from the moral philosophy of Nietzsche to the cultural anthropology of Gluckman.

In order to try to bring coherence and an empirical site to the study of evil, Lemert focuses on sorcery and witchcraft, moving across cultures to set up the argument. But before we can get to witchcraft and the intention of doing harm, we need to take on the very core of "the project" that Lemert set for himself. Moral philosophy will never be the same since Hitler, who always emerges as the quintessential evil figure. Yet, context is everything.

And here, of course, lies the problem of a decontextualized notion of "the intent to do harm to another" as evil. One could make the case that the attempted assassination of Hitler was in behalf of "putting an end" to a greater evil—and thus "a higher good." But then that is precisely what Raskolnikov appealed to in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment.* In short, any discussion of the morality play of evil must have its alter ego in good—and, speaking sociologically, that is the trouble with evil. One cannot locate a "good and evil" independent of social structure, since, as Karl Mannheim noted early on, social structure and moral order are inevitably linked.

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Durkheim, Morals and Modernity. By W. Watts Miller. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996. Pp. viii+288. $45.00.

Edward A. Tiryakian
Duke University

At century's end, as at century's beginning, Émile Durkheim is having a banner decade. New volumes on Durkheim and new editions and new translations of his classic works are appearing, many of these stimulated by centennial anniversaries (*The Division of Labor in Society* [1893]; *Rules of the Sociological Method* [1895]; *Suicide* [1897]; the first volume of *L'Année sociologique* [1898]). And if Durkheim could not join Malraux, whose remains were recently reburied in the Pantheon, at least now sociological pilgrims can see a plate bearing his name near the Sorbonne (260, rue Saint Jacques) indicating that he lived there between 1909 and 1912; even better, a rue Durkheim was officially opened at the beginning of 1997 in the proximity of the new Bibliothèque Nationale. Of all the tributes to his influence—even if in the case of radical feminist critiques such as Jennifer Lehmann's "Durkheim's Theories of Deviance and Suicide" (*American Journal of Sociology* 100 [1995] 904–30) Durkheim's treatment of women is viewed as prototypical of mainstream sociology's patriarchal bias—what might well please Durkheim the most is that *groups* of scholars, not just isolated individuals, are discussing him or, rather, discussing the relevance of his studies not only for research in the history of sociology but even more, for approaching problems of our own days.

One such group, particularly active, is the British Centre for Durkheimian Studies at Oxford, organized by W. S. F. Pickering. The group has been holding numerous conferences and publishing a series of high-quality occasional papers. A core member is the author of the present study, W. Watts Miller, the translator into English of Durkheim's Latin thesis on Montesquieu.

Durkheim, Morals and Modernity makes an excellent companion volume to Donald Levine's recent *Visions of the Sociological Tradition* (University of Chicago Press, 1995). The latter emphasizes a unity in the sociological tradition in terms of an underlying search for "the good society," a search framed by "a quest for a secular ethic," whose roots, Levine cogently argues, can be traced back to Aristotle. Of the various familiar figures in the sociological pantheon, Durkheim is the primus inter pares who took on, from the start to the finish of his career, the sociological quest for such an ethic, with the sociology of morals as an integral part of his research program. The linkage with Aristotle, as Watts Miller points out (p. 73), is manifested in Durkheim's citation of Aristotle's *Politics* in the frontispiece of *The Division of Labor.* "A city [polis] is not made up of people who are the same: it is different from an alliance" (*alliance* here is to be understood as an "aggregate of homogeneous individuals," unlike the *city,* which is an organic unity that coheres in the division of labor). Further, Watts Miller argues (p. 132), Durkheim's af-

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finity with Aristotle runs through *The Division of Labor* with the modern individual personality, striving for self-realization as its telos, enriched rather than diminished by occupational specialization and its ensuing networks.

The 10 chapters of this work are grouped under two headings. The first half is categorized as "America," an allusion to Durkheim as a Columbus seeking a new sociological passage from "is" to "ought," that is, to an ethics suitable for modernity. The second part, "The Kingdom and the Republic," has as a major focus Durkheim grappling with the legacy of Kantian ethics, particularly regarding freedom and the autonomy of the person. Watts Miller provides a meticulous reading of Durkheim's early journey, reflecting Durkheim's exposure to Montesquieu, to the republican principles of the French Revolution, and to the nascent German social science (Durkheim was particularly taken with Wundt's empirical approach to ethics). Confronting two opposite ethics, that of "despotic socialism," which leads to the authoritarian state, and radical liberalism, which leaves only fragmented atomized individualism, Durkheim sought a sort of Aristotelian golden mean in what Watts Miller calls the modern "organic self." This represents an interesting dualism of real modern "man" embedded in the division of labor, a dualism of autonomy and interdependence within which we strive to realize a bundle of modern values: equality, liberty, justice, fraternity. For the division of labor to be operative so as to generate both a greater individuation *and* cohesion and commitment, it must be "spontaneous" rather than constrained by inequality of conditions, the latter at the root of the various pathologies that Durkheim noted in the third part of *The Division of Labor.* In discussing the pathologies of individualism, notably but not solely suicide, Watts Miller draws attention (pp. 222–27) to Durkheim's modern society being a "risk society," which can undermine an ideal "republic of persons." Unlike Ulrich Beck's version of risk society and its focus on the environmental and technological risks of modernity (*Risk Society* [Sage, 1992]), Durkheim is more concerned with the systematic invisible risks, to both individuals and the collective, of an outmoded traditional morality and lack of commitment to the ideals of the "republic of persons."

This tightly written work is of course not the first treatment of Durkheim connecting his sociology with ethics and morals, having been preceded by Wallwork (*Durkheim. Morality and Milieu* [Harvard University Press, 1972]) and Bellah (*Émile Durkheim on Morality and Society* [University of Chicago Press, 1973]), among others. Its sympathetic but often critical treatment combines with an excellent bibliography to produce a study well worth reading, not only for sociologists already familiar with the major Durkheimian classics, but, perhaps more important, for those interested in the new communitarian movement (expressed, e.g., in Amitai Etzioni, ed., *Rights and the Common Good* [St. Martin's Press, 1995]). Of all the figures at the core of the sociological tradition, Durkheim is the (modern) communitarian par excellence. For liberals and social democrats who seek to renovate a faltering commitment to the en-

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lightenment and its implied republic of virtue, this is an opportune time to bring Durkheim's sociology of morals to the communitarian table.

The Intellectual Revolt against Liberal Democracy, 1870–1945: International Conference in Memory of Jacob L. Talmon. Edited by Zeev Sternhell. Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1996. Pp. 397. $40.00.

Patrice Louis-René Higonnet
Harvard University

This highly problematic collection honors the memory of Jacob Talmon, who died a decade or so ago. Its noble purpose is to assert the ongoing presence of Talmon's favored subject, namely the Enlightenment, loosely defined in the introduction as a "rational utopia," and as a critique of traditionalist "religion, philosophy, morality, law, history, economics and politics" (p. 12), a definition, one might add, which seems to include Rousseau as an Enlightenment critic, although that, certainly, was not Talmon's point of view. The book also aims to criticize the Enlightenment's intellectual enemies from the advent of modern anti-Semitism to the collapse of the Third Reich. There are no heroes here, but we do alas have many villains: Nietzsche especially, with close behind him, Drumont, Barrès, and Bataille; Gentile, Ortega, and Hulme; and Spengler, Hans Freyer, Carl Schmitt, and Heidegger.

With some exceptions, as in Muller's pages on German conservatives during Weimar, the essays run over very familiar ground. (Some of the pieces forthrightly present themselves as summaries of books or other works.) This collection is not new, then, nor is it spacious. Its central flaw is that it persistently ignores the larger contextual aspects of the issues it describes.

It is, to begin with, only concerned with the anti-Enlightenment of the right. Marinetti secures more attention than Trotsky and Lenin put together. As regards Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, the referential score is 23 to nought. Could it be that the (twisted) filiation of revolutionary Marxism to 1789 and the Enlightenment exonerates it from liberal and humane disapproval?

Other difficulties—though of course this is never mentioned—reach back to the equally problematic work of Jacob Talmon, which was itself dated and Manichaean. For this scholar, deeply marked as well he might be, by the fascist horrors of the 1930s and 1940s, life was in black and white: "Both [the liberal and the totalitarian] schools," wrote Talmon (quoted on p. 381) "affirm the supreme value of Liberty. But whereas the one finds the essence of freedom in spontaneity and the absence of coercion, the other believes it to be realized only in the pursuit and attainment of an absolute and collective purpose." Well, yes, of course, but world history is not about clearly distinct intellectual traditions that func-

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tion in a void. The so-called liberal and totalitarian schools are at best ideal-types. (The haphazard formulation and Cold War, politically opportunistic use of the term "totalitarianism" are well known.) Moreover, in real life, the varied applications of these supposed "totalitarian" and "liberal" principles are legion. Faced with a dreadful choice, would anyone rather live in Nazi Germany than in Fascist Italy? Are there no contextual distinctions to be made among Lenin, Stalin, and Gorbachev? Between Nazism in a time of peace and in a time of war? In its treatment of Western and Eastern Europeans? Between Britain in the 1840s and in the 1940s?

With two or three exceptions, such as Jeffrey Herf's essay on the modernistic dimension of Nazi thought and practice, the collection, like Talmon himself, ignores such complexities. Indeed, most of the essays defiantly underscore Talmon's naive categorizations by assuming that all those writers, philosophers, and poets (painters and musicians are hardly mentioned) who were in some way hostile to any of the varyingly politicized incarnations of Enlightenment ideas between 1870 and 1945 had to be in some overt or covert way the running dogs of fascism and mindless authority. Gaetano Salvemini, for example, is taken to task for saying that Italian parliamentarism, as it existed, filled him with disgust and horror (p. 271). Then, a few paragraphs later, he is linked by association to Croce and de Gasperi as basically antiliberal. But is it not a fact that Italian parliamentarism *was* corrupt, unrepresentative, inefficient, bellicose, and mendacious? Likewise, an essay on French Catholicism, worthy by its tone of Combisme in its most vulgar form, works very hard to associate Catholic identity in all its forms with "doctrines of hatred." Unsurprisingly, what is remembered of Tocqueville is not his acceptance of democracy, his defense of liberty, or his little-known suspicion of Gobineau's racism, but his well-known suspicion of mass society, another sure sign—in the optic of this book—of fascistic tendencies. Clearly, then, if you do not like Disneyland and soap operas, you had better not read this book, unless you are ready to think of yourself as yet one more unpleasant enemy of "enlightened truth."

Ideologies, crudely described, are the reference point of this book. That the Enlightenment was differently interpreted from place to place and time to time is ignored, as is the fact that many critiques of its assorted political incarnations made a lot of sense. Should we ignore the historical connection between laudable Enlightenment values (individualism, rationality, and universalism) and deplorable contingent excrescences, as in the links between individualism and 19th-century industrial exploitation, rationality and the rejection of the unconscious, and universalism and the imposition of Western values on people who do not like them?

For me, Diderot is the archetypal Enlightenment thinker: serious and frivolous, biased and open minded, imaginative and learned, methodical and curious, tolerant and trenchant. What would he have thought of this collection? Decide for yourself.

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Anti-Semitism in Germany: The Post-Nazi Epoch since 1945. By Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb. Translated by Belinda Cooper and Allison Brown. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1996. Pp. ix+385. $39.95.

Elinor Scarbrough
University of Essex

Nazism and the Holocaust still, half a century later, reverberate in modern-day Germany. Although the idea of such disasters again befalling Germany is scarcely credible, scholarly concern to understand how they could have happened and to investigate what residues they have left in popular consciousness reflects recurrent anxieties among Germans, and others, about coming to terms with the past. Recent events such as the historians' debate and the upsurge of violence against Jewish targets, together with the persisting sensitivity of public statements about Jews and Germany's relations with Israel, make this study of contemporary anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism, and xenophobia in Germany especially apt. The authors, and the publishers, are also to be congratulated for making this substantial study available in English.

In addition to their own survey, conducted in 1987, Bergmann and Erb incorporate data from earlier and later surveys undertaken by other researchers. These enable them to track trends in popular attitudes among the people of West Germany and to point up contrasts with the people of East Germany. For their own study, Bergmann and Erb devised indices (confirmed by factor analysis of multiple items) measuring anti-Semitism based on concepts of stereotypes, emotional rejection, and social distance; anti-Zionism based on attitudes toward Israel, German reparations, and war guilt; and xenophobia based on attitudes toward other "out" groups. The authors warn against interpreting single questions at face value: voicing anti-Semitic opinions violates what has become the social norm in Germany. Hence, Bergmann and Erb pay close attention to interpreting "undecided" responses; as the attitudinal items were highly prejudicial, those responses might reveal either "secondary" anti-Semitism or a "spiral of silence."

The evidence presented is straightforward but sometimes puzzling. Vehement, hard-core anti-Semitism in West Germany is confined to a small minority of some 7%, a further minority of about 12% is characterized as strongly anti-Semitic; and some one-third of the population is classified as *potentially* anti-Semitic. In short, something over one-half of the people of West Germany, in the late 1980s, are represented as prejudiced against Jews in some measure. What *potential* anti-Semitism might lead to, however, is not specified, and Bergmann and Erb themselves warn against interpreting opinions as a readiness to act accordingly, or to support others who do. The numbers here are at some odds with the general thrust of the study: namely, anti-Semitism is a minority phenomenon

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sited in a legal, political, and social environment committed against anti-Semitic bigotry.

The correlates of anti-Semitism are much as expected: in general, being of an older generation, of little education beyond secondary level, unskilled employment (notably farmwork), more likely male than female, and being an older churchgoer (i.e., relatively immune to modern Christian theology). Regrettably, these correlates are presented as simple distributions, hence we do not have the measure of their significance. Although Bergmann and Erb are careful not to talk in causal terms, modeling these data statistically would have yielded a clearer picture of the locus of contemporary anti-Semitism. The data also indicate an association between anti-Semitism and right-wing political orientation, dramatically so among the (very few) supporters of the German National Party but also evident among Christian Democrats. Contrary to the more general claim that anti-Semitism in today's Germany "exists . . . only in ideological fragments and as personal prejudice," this suggests that anti-Semitism is part of a larger worldview. There is much food here, in the richness of these data, for further investigation.

The contrasts between East and West Germany are intriguing, albeit examined all too briefly. The 1992 EMNID survey reveals far lower levels of anti-Semitism in former East Germany (around 4%–6%), which Bergmann and Erb attribute to the trenchant antifascist ideology propagated by the East German regime: anti-Semitism was represented as a capitalist phenomenon and the constant reiteration of antifascism "left no room" for anti-Semitism. This interpretation implies that the pluralism officially fostered in West Germany may not be the most effective way to eradicate anti-Semitism—which, in turn, suggests that anti-Semitism (and other forms of xenophobia) cannot be eradicated in democratic societies, only contained. Democratic theorists might ponder the discussion in chapter 12.

That said, theorists of other kinds may be perplexed. Bergmann and Erb reject psychological and sociopsychological approaches to attitude formation in favor of a sociology of knowledge. Why they do so is unclear; moreover, the anti-Semitic index, in particular, consists of items that draw upon psychological and sociopsychological theory. The authors are particularly robust in dismissing latency theory in favor of *communicative latency,* due to "dangerous" opinions being excluded from public discussion. Scrutiny of the "undecided" responses, however, demonstrates that nothing more than lack of knowledge is at work. In all, this study reveals a wealth of data couched in an indeterminate theoretical perspective.

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Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy. Edited by Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kushar. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. Pp. xvii+380. $19.95.

Eli Zaretsky
New School for Social Research

Public and Private in Thought and Practice is a well-edited collection of articles intended to demonstrate the protean as opposed to the unitary character of the public/private dichotomy. Among the diverse topics approached through the lens of the dichotomy are Habermas's public sphere theory (Craig Calhoun), the legal meaning of privacy (Jean Cohen), Goffman's notion of "backstage" (Alan Wolfe), the changing meaning of friendship (Allan Silver), the dissimulation of identity under Soviet conditions (Oleg Kharkhordin), and the meanings of modernist and postmodernist architecture (David Brain). Many of the articles are of high quality, yet the book's very aim makes for a diffuseness such that the whole does not transcend the sum of its parts.

The lead article by Jeff Weintraub marks out four broad fields of knowledge in which versions of the public/private distinction are deployed: (1) the relation of the state to the market, (2) the republican emphasis on the political community as opposed to the market and private life, (3) the contrast between sociability, for example, in urban space, and private life, in the sense of intimacy or domesticity, and (4) the distinction between the larger economic and political order and the family. Weintraub gives a more or less presentist history of these discourses and an orientation to their leading works. His essay is clear, helpful, and obviously the product of much thought and research. Nonetheless, it fails to explain why its proposed topology is superior to alternative ones. Nor does it distinguish the conceptual forms that structure the dichotomy such as psychological, phenomenological, institutional, or cultural forms. The limitations of Weintraub's schema are belied by the fact that the articles are not grouped according to its fourfold categorization.

The volume does not succeed in establishing its central thesis: that a "unitary" or synthetic approach to the dichotomy is neither possible nor desirable. Above all, it fails to explain why the present-day multiplicity of discourses and meanings cannot be well explained and ordered by an historical approach. Such an approach would distinguish the ancient conception, which prioritized the public realm, from the modern, which arose with early capitalism and which limited public power in order to free up labor, creativity, and individual initiative as expressed in such forms as civil society—what John Stuart Mill called "experiments in living" and what Habermas called the "public sphere." The family's role as productive unit in early capitalism and the decline of that role in modernity would be at the center of such an approach. One would then go on to show how industrialization, Fordism, and present-day globalization transformed the meanings of the early liberal dichotomy. Such an ap-

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proach would thereby demonstrate that a "unitary" approach is not inconsistent with complexity and multiplicity.

Unsurprisingly, then, the best articles in the collection are those that take a long-range historical approach. Several are indispensable. Jean Cohen lucidly explains the legal concept of privacy used in *Roe v. Wade,* rejecting both feminist (e.g., Catharine MacKinnon's) and communitarian (Michael Sandel's) arguments against it. Cohen's argument rests on a historical understanding of the changes in the family from its patriarchal form (which "privacy" protected) to its present-day status as the vehicle of personal life. She calls for a historically informed reconceptualization of "privacy." Likewise, Allan Silver reads the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers as arguing that the emergence of market capitalism makes possible friendship in the modern sense by separating interest from personal relations. Precapitalist friendship, by contrast, was corrupted by the web of dependence on particular others. Like the philosophers he discusses, Silver's strength lies in his historical approach, but, also like them, he does not consider the harm that capitalism does to personal relations, for example, by eroding the possibilities for experience in depth. On the other hand, history can also be misused. Karen V. Hansen is inaccurate on the early history of socialist feminism and believes that she is refuting a theoretical dichotomy when she is merely presenting empirical evidence of the complex forms through which the dichotomy was lived.

One of the most original and important articles in the collection can also be read as contributing to the contextualization of the public/private divide in its liberal capitalist form by exploring its functioning in a nonliberal context. Oleg Kharkhordin's "Reveal and Dissimulate: A Genealogy of Private Life in Soviet Russia" shows that the attempt to moralize and politicize private life in the Soviet Union created a new distinction between the politicized realm of personal life (*lichnaia zhizn'*) and private or secret life (*chastnaia zhizn'*). Kharkhordin's is a powerful statement that suggests the inescapability of a dichotomy that may well be coincident with human society itself, that was discerned in all state societies for which we have records, and that has found its most developed and self-conscious form under capitalism.

In conclusion, the importance of the theme and the quality of the articles make this quite a valuable collection for sociologists and social thinkers. But its central idea, the "inadequacy of any single model" of the dichotomy (p. xiii), is too banal to make the collection cohere.

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Private Wealth and Public Life: Foundation Philanthropy and the Reshaping of American Social Policy from the Progressive Era to the New Deal. By Judith Sealander. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. Pp. xii+349. $39.95.

Peter Frumkin
Harvard University

Research on all aspects of private philanthropy is booming. The current interest in philanthropy has led a growing cadre of scholars from a variety of disciplines to delve not only into the current practices of foundations, but also the history, strategies, and visions of philanthropy's earliest practitioners who defined the field around the turn of the century. Judith Sealander's new book is an important contribution to this literature. It focuses on a series of significant foundation initiatives from 1903, when the first of many Rockefeller philanthropies was established, to 1932, the year President Herbert Hoover's electoral defeat led to major changes in social policy. Sealander's goal is to show how foundation interventions in a number of critical social policy realms spurred changes in American social policy.

Private Wealth and Public Life mainly examines the work of seven foundations that attempted to address important social problems and shape public policy. The six major chapters of the book each take up a distinct field of social policy and describe the large foundation initiatives in each. Drawing extensively on materials from the Rockefeller Archives Center, Sealander describes many of the earliest and best known philanthropic interventions with considerable insight and detail. *Private Wealth and Public Life* does not attempt to be comprehensive but instead attempts to locate the most influential philanthropic work and relate it to developments in early policy debates at the national level. The book focuses on the work of Rockefeller's four main philanthropies, as well as the Rosenwald Fund, the Russell Sage Foundation, and the Commonwealth Fund in areas such as rural education, public health, parental education, the mothers' pensions movement, child welfare and juvenile court reform, sex education, physical fitness, and public recreation. While several of these foundation initiatives are known to scholars through existing scholarly work, Sealander makes a useful contribution by showing the connections between some of these early philanthropic efforts and consistently situating them in historical context. There is, however, at least one controversial omission: Sealander sweepingly dismisses the work of the various Carnegie philanthropies as having "little influence" (p. 251).

It is obvious that Sealander is a historian by training: Her book includes over 100 pages of notes and bibliographic references. While the level of detail and the marshaling of sources is impressive, Sealander initially spends an unnecessary amount of time in historiographic squabbles with other scholars. Rather than describing what is wrong with the ear-

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lier research, Sealander might have better focused on developing more fully her own master narrative. The principal weakness of the book is the absence of a powerful and compelling story line to unite the many programmatic and institutional histories. *Private Wealth and Public Life* is ultimately built on a set of distinct mininarratives that are held together only very loosely by a nebulous explanatory framework: Sealander maintains that "a few national philanthropic foundations spurred, but did not control, the emergence of a different American state, with a significantly expanded social-policy role" (p. 31). The problem with this model is that it lacks specificity about just how in practice foundation influence was exerted on government.

Reading *Private Wealth and Public Life* prompts one to recall James S. Coleman's dictum that good social history—no matter from what discipline it emanates—must work hard to explain the transition between two levels of analysis. All too often, Coleman groused, historical accounts rely on an inadequate "aggregation theory" to move quickly and unconvincingly from individual actions to social outcomes, almost always without detailing adequately how the interaction and interdependence of individual actions explain broad social outcomes. Sealander's account, while filled with wonderful archival material and insights about the early foundations, does not quite have the complexity of argument needed to meet Coleman's charge to historians. As a consequence, we are left with a series of well-executed accounts of foundation involvement in various social policy domains, but we are given little indication of how major decisions were made within foundations, how foundation leaders interacted with one another and with policymakers, how foundation programs actually shaped the thinking of government officials, and how social policy itself was changed as a consequence.

These missing historical linkages aside, Sealander's book will surely be viewed as a significant foray into what has become a fast-growing field. New research on foundations has been spurred by the opening of foundation archives and the availability of research grants to carry out historical work on philanthropy. Other major studies of early philanthropic interventions are expected soon, and these will surely complement and challenge Sealander's account. For the time being, however, this book represents a good starting point to begin a much needed debate over philanthropy's role in society and its relationship to the public policy process.

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Museums and Money: The Impact of Funding on Exhibitions, Scholarship, and Management. By Victoria D. Alexander. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996. Pp. xiii+204. $24.95.

Diana Crane
University of Pennsylvania

Victoria Alexander had the excellent idea of using organizational theory to examine an important and controversial issue: the effect of external sources of funding on the programs and management of American art museums. Specifically, Alexander addresses the question of how the shift in museum funding from private patrons to corporations, foundations, and government agencies in the mid-1960s affected the characteristics of museum exhibitions. Did the new funders impose new goals on museums that conflicted with the traditional aims of museum curators? Alexander's review of several theoretical perspectives, including production of culture theory, resource dependency theory, strategy models, and institutional theory led her to conclude that museum administrators would attempt to reorient their policies to attract external funders, which in turn would conflict with traditional museum policies that were developed to establish the legitimacy of these organizations.

To answer these questions, Alexander examined the characteristics of exhibitions mounted by 30 large and prestigious art museums between 1960 and 1986, using quantitative and qualitative data obtained from annual reports and from interviews with curators and museum directors. Unfortunately, her reliance on annual reports for quantitative data entailed a sizable amount of missing data, which substantially reduces the *N*s in some of her tables. The majority of her statistical analyses deals with only 15 out of the 30 museums in her sample.

Alexander's data show a dramatic increase in the average number of exhibitions per museum per year as well as an increase in the number of funded exhibitions although unfunded exhibitions still substantially outnumbered the former. Analysis of the effects of different types of funders on the characteristics of museum exhibitions provides support for a resource dependency interpretation of the behavior of museum organizations. Both corporate and government funders tend to support blockbuster and traveling exhibitions but corporate funders particularly prefer "easy to understand" popular exhibitions that attract large audiences, while government funders prefer exhibitions of postmodern and contemporary art. Individual funders tend to support exhibitions of their own collections, reflecting the tastes of elite collectors. Alexander concludes that pressures from the new funders led to "a drastic reorientation of museums from internal matters . . . to external matters (exhibitions and audiences) . . . a move from a more elite mission to a more populist one" (p. 53). Since funded exhibitions represent only 21% of all exhibitions, an important issue is whether funders' priorities affected the types of exhibitions funded internally. Analysis of the entire exhibition pool indi-

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cates greater changes in the format than in the stylistic content of exhibitions, suggesting that the overall quality of exhibitions has been maintained. Even with increasing external pressure, there was still room for curators to maneuver by picking and choosing among funders and drawing on museum funds to mount exhibitions that would not otherwise have been funded. This lends support to organizational theories concerning the importance of managerial autonomy, buffering (protecting key aspects of the organization from external pressures), and resource shifting.

Another element in Alexander's argument is that the increasing rationalization of the museum environment has led to changes in the same direction inside these organizations. Based on interviews with museum staff, her argument is that these changes entailed increasing conflict between two major aspects of museum organization, the emphasis on conservation and art history as compared to the concern with art as a business and the museum as a profit-making enterprise. Her evidence suggests that the new funding environment greatly increased the influence of the business and administrative side of museum organizations, while these developments forced the curatorial staff to seek new and more innovative solutions in selecting art genres and obtaining funding.

Finally, she shows that organizational structures of museums have become increasingly alike as similar external pressures lead museums to similar solutions and to increased interaction with one another. At the same time, structural similarity is accompanied by increased differentiation in substance as museums attempt to locate specialized stylistic niches that increase their ability to compete with one another, suggesting the relevance of an ecological interpretation.

Alexander's work adds an important dimension to our understanding of forces that have transformed the nature of all forms of high culture in recent years and that have become especially salient in the fine arts as a result of heated controversies over arts funding and the censorship of controversial art works. A parallel study of the effects of changes in museum funding on the level and types of art acquisitions is definitely needed to clarify the consequences of changes in the museum environment for the development of artistic styles.

This book will appeal to specialists in the sociology of culture, the sociology of organizations, and cultural policy. Written in an accessible and relatively jargon-free style, Alexander's book is appropriate for both graduate and undergraduate courses in the sociology of art, culture, policy, and organizations.

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Goldbugs and Greenbacks: The Antimonopoly Tradition and the Politics of Finance in America. By Gretchen Ritter. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. xii+303. $54.95.

Bruce G. Carruthers
Northwestern University

Money is a very curious thing. It performs a critical function in modern market exchange, serving as the symbol, measure, and repository of economic value. And yet in its common paper form, money has no intrinsic worth—its value is entirely a social construction. People accept money only because they believe others will accept it, too. Furthermore, money operates at and serves to connect two distinct levels: the cultural level wherein values are represented and symbolized and the material level of economic production and exchange.

Such monetary mysteries seem mostly academic, for they rarely capture the American political imagination or concern the common citizenry. The one dramatic exception is the postbellum period of the greenbackers and populists. In *Goldbugs and Greenbacks,* Gretchen Ritter has seized this moment and used it to explore some of the most fundamental questions of political economy and economic development: What sort of relationship is possible between the market and the state? Was corporate liberalism the only possible outcome for the developing U.S. economy? Her insightful analysis is grounded in a detailed and thorough understanding of 19th-century American political and financial institutions and conflicts.

The book develops three issues: monetary debates between 1865 and 1896, the existence of two alternatives in these debates (roughly, bullionist vs. greenbacker/populist), and the role of history in U.S. political development. To broach her first theme, Ritter asks why money and banking became so politically salient in the postbellum period. She points out how various structural conditions problematized finance (e.g., the very uneven distribution of banks and currency and the division of the country into debtor and creditor regions), but also argues that finance crystallized and embodied a whole set of issues that included democracy, citizenship, race, nationalism, and gender. The political fight was not just about a choice between the gold standard and fiat money, or whether to monetarize silver, or how to repay the national debt. For greenbackers, democracy was much more than a "political" matter, for it also implicated the economy. That is, it made sense to ask if the economy was truly democratic. Greenbackers and populists drew on an older antimonopolist tradition in American political culture that privileged producers over nonproducers and viewed banks as the lynchpin in a system of political and economic domination. To varying degrees, both groups proposed that American citizens assert direct political control over the economy.

Ritter rightly recognizes how much national American political life unfolded at the state rather than federal level. Thus, she conducts an especially careful analysis of greenbacker and populist politics in three states:

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North Carolina, Illinois, and Massachusetts. In shifting to the state level, she is able to exploit very considerable variations in politics, economics, and finance. North Carolina, for example, had its banking system destroyed during the Civil War, possessed an agrarian economy, and operated mostly under a one-party (Democratic) system. The problems of the Illinois banking system, by contrast, derived from other factors, although it functioned somewhat more adequately. Illinois had a mixed agrarian-industrial economy and politically was fairly competitive. Massachusetts possessed a well-developed banking system and an industrial economy and was firmly Republican. Yet even there, farmers and workers united to give greenbackers a significant measure of political support. In general, financial politics were complicated by the fact that monetary conflicts frequently cut across party lines. Political opponents pursued narrowly self-interested policies but also offered philosophical meditations on the general nature of value.

Although the bullionists defeated both greenbackers and populists, the outcome was no foregone conclusion. Antimonopolists offered a coherent alternative vision for American society, and although they failed for many reasons, they were certainly not doomed to failure. Ritter uses the contingent nature of the outcome to reflect more generally on history's role in political development. This third theme of the book seemed to me the least successful, offering some familiar characterizations of history as neither linear nor inevitable, but rather "layered" and "contingent" (p. 273). That theme, and the odd choice of Denmark as a comparison case to show the viability of financial alternatives, are the weakest elements in an otherwise convincing treatment.

After the failure of populism in the 1896 election, money receded as a political issue, becoming once more an innocuous feature of the economy that was generally overlooked in both everyday life and academic sociology. In addition to educating readers about a transformative period in American political history, Ritter's book will remind them of the fullness of economic contradictions, political conflicts, cultural meanings, and sociological richness that is wrapped up in a dollar bill.

Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism. Edited by Aihwa Ong and Donald M. Nonini. New York: Routledge, 1996. Pp. viii+343. $74.95 (cloth); $21.95 (paper).

Allen Chun
Academia Sinica

This book deals with a topic that in many respects has been neglected too long but whose appearance now as an object of critical reflection and social theorizing is quite timely. As a collection of essays, this book covers much ground, both historically and geographically. The essays by Prasenjit Duara on Chinese overseas nationalism and by Carl Trocki on early

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Chinese enterprises in Southeast Asia, which were not part of the conference from which the book originated, provide a kind of historical background to the modern Chinese transnational capitalism that forms the focus of the book. With the exception of Aihwa Ong's article on Chinese modernities, which tries to synthesize the Chinese transnational experience as an alternative site of modernity, most of the essays were based on contemporary empirical studies of topics covering spatial narratives of Chinese travelers inside and outside the People's Republic of China (PRC) (Xin Liu), the cultural logic of Chinese factory labor regimes in Hong Kong and Shenzhen (Ching kwan Lee), localizing strategies of Taiwanese capitalists in Fujian (You-tien Hsing), transient labor experiences of Malaysian Chinese abroad (Donald Nonini), tensions between Canadian and immigrant Hong Kong Chinese created by foreign capital and differing lifestyles (Katharyne Mitchell), the history of cultural hybridity of Chinese living in Thailand and Philippines (Christina Szanton Blanc), and the reshaping of cosmopolitan imagination portrayed in the Shanghai mass media (Mayfair Yang).

The historical depth and interdisciplinary perspectives are significant contributions to the study of the complexity of Chinese transnational experiences. The significance of this effort should be situated against more simplistic approaches to the topic that underscore sinocentric prejudices and champion highbrow syntheses of renewed Confucianism in East Asian economies. By accenting transnationalism, the book suggests the existence of forces underlying the Chinese experience that elude containment by nation-states while building upon logical relations that are intrinsically different from the West. Whether these "forces" and "relations" are constitutive of a distinctive kind of "modernity" is a question effectively posed by the authors, but whether these articles provide consistent, systematic answers to the question is perhaps debatable.

One might first ask why Chinese transnational modernity of the kind celebrated by the book has taken so long to be recognized by scholars. I think this can be attributed partly to the recent success of Chinese transnational capitalists and partly to the rise of a new global capitalism that has raised scholarly doubts about the bounded nature of national cultures and economies. These two are not cleanly separated in the book but are necessary in order to distinguish in what sense Chinese transnationalism of the kind seen today is the product of ongoing cultural practices and recent global interventions. As Trocki cogently argues for the early history of Chinese enterprise in Southeast Asia, the key organizational structures that drive Chinese capitalism today were built upon multiethnic alliances that led to the dominance of Chinese business in Southeast Asia, to a degree that reverses colonialist historiography. Or as Trocki put it, "It was the British flag that followed the Chinese coolies." Yet perhaps contrary to Nonini and Liu, I would argue that the diasporic negotiations and sense of spatial displacement experienced by Malaysian Chinese transient laborers and PRC villagers are no different from the mass emigration of Chinese abroad in the 19th century, despite our "improved"

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terminology. Likewise, Liu's statement that "by transgressing local, regional or national boundaries on a large scale, Chinese subjects are increasingly set 'free' " is apparently more a revelation on his part than a theoretical discovery of new facts. On the other hand, articles by Lee and Hsing show that cultural logics in different institutional contexts underscore the importance of local adaptability as an essential Chinese enterpreneurial practice that underscores its transnational success. I stress that adaptive practices rather than reliance on Chinese concepts like *guanxi* are the essential traits of Chinese enterprise because, contrary to the way that the authors suggest the distinctiveness of certain cultural concepts as central to a Chinese mode of production or modernity generally, the pragmatic tendency of Chinese business to operate within local specificity rather than on the basis of accepted legal standards or other modes of "rational organization" is precisely in my opinion the key to their success. As Hsing's article clearly demonstrates, *guanxi* may be a traditional concept, but the key to the success of Taiwanese businessmen is also partly the consequence of local/official discrepancies that prompted them to resort to *guanxi* as an adaptive strategy. In Lee's case, there are clearly Chinese cultural logics, but they adapted to different institutional contexts and social matrices. There was a time when the kind of exploitative labor relations seen in Shenzhen existed in Hong Kong, too.

Oddly enough, despite the seemingly political economy orientation of the editors, relatively little emphasis was placed on class as a differentiating factor. In Mitchell's lucid account of conflicts between Canadian residents and nouveau riche Chinese immigrants, it is clear that the immense impact of these immigrants on local life was largely due to the brute imposition of foreign capital, both in the construction of "monster houses" and nepotistic business alliances. The massive influx of working-class Chinese immigrants in the 19th century, which still composes the large proportion of Chinese in Vancouver, created much less social conflict by comparison. In this case, cultural differences magnified ethnic conflicts, but the sociopolitical impact of these incidents has to do with the sociological effects of power and capital and not the nature of the transnational encounter itself. Ironically, Blanc's account of the assimilative history of the Chinese in Thailand and the Philippines clearly shows that the multicultural adaptive tendencies of the Chinese was consistent with their economic and social strategies, prior to the advent of transnational capitalism. The refiguring of cosmopolitan Shanghai in Yang's analysis is another example of how, albeit in the context of state and society in the PRC, imaginations of the Other can be mobilized through the media, although it is debatable to what degree these visions of cosmopolitanism can play on while not transcending officially sanctioned ones.

My mix of praise and criticism of these essays has ramifications for how one should conceptualize the nature of Chinese modernity, which is the subject of Ong's essay. Ong adroitly juxtaposes the state project of Chinese modernity against this moment of "triumphalist capitalism" and views the diverse experiences in Asian modernity as the result of ongoing

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tension between these two forces. While this aptly captures the process of political economic development in an Asian context, I think it is quite confusing to depict both these forces by the same term of *modernity.* The utilitarian imperatives that drove Chinese entrepreneurs clearly predated competing forms of capitalist organization and were analytically distinct from the modernity of the state. The fact that the success of these archetypical Chinese capitalists took place outside China should be a vindication of their diasporic roots or deterritorialized nature. It might be another way of questioning the state's modernity project at some level as incompatible with such "capitalism." The success of early Chinese entrepreneurs obviously depended on multicultural skills but, equally important, involved local institutional collusion, whatever it was. No doubt the state's cloaking of economic modernity in terms of Confucianism or other cultural logic clearly becomes a source of tension. In this regard, Duara's conclusion that the "early synthesis of Confucian capitalism was particularly suited" to leaders and mercantile elites in a way that has ramifications for later modernity is somewhat misguided. Finally, one should not overlook the context of discussion that has prompted us to romanticize tycoons like Li Ka-shing and the Riadys, when early Republican China and postwar Taiwan are full of rich capitalists and successful corporations. The emergence of transnational capitalism has singled out such people precisely because it has given rise to Asian regional economies in which such multicultural entrepreneurs figure prominently. While this should not deflate the importance of the phenomenon, it should remind us of our own embeddedness to the world and discourses within which we speak.

Corporate Welfare Policy and the Welfare State: Bank Deregulation and the Savings and Loan Bailout. By Davita Silfen Glasberg and Dan Skidmore. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1997. Pp. vii+172. $42.95 (cloth); $20.95 (paper).

Patrick Akard
Skidmore College

A central theme of *Corporate Welfare Policy and the Welfare State* is the ideology of financial sector "reform." Bank deregulation was part of the broader "state project" of reduced government and increased reliance on market processes in the 1980s. Yet, while state capacities for *social* welfare provision were being reduced, the bailout of the savings and loan (S&L) industry and of selected commercial banks represented a continued commitment to *corporate* welfare. The authors trace this outcome to the relative power and political resources of finance capital.

After an opening critique of prominent "grand theories" of the state ("business dominance," "state centered," "structural Marxist," "class dialectical"), the authors note approvingly the "accommodationist turn" in

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recent literature that acknowledges the multicausal and historically contingent character of policy formation. Their own "structural contingency" approach goes further in recognizing the impact of multiple factors. Rejecting traditional pluralism, however, they also argue for a systematic bias or "structural selectivity" embedded in existing state institutions that reflects the "balance of class forces" within and outside the state. This bias must not be reified, since different causal factors will be more or less significant under differing conditions which must be specified in any historical case (thus "contingency").

The substantive focus of the book is two key legislative initiatives: the Garn–St. Germain Act of 1982 and the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act (FIRREA) of 1989. Garn–St. Germain was a response to the problems of finance capital during the economic upheavals of the era. The S&Ls in particular were saddled with long-term, low-interest home loans, while interest rates on new deposits and options for asset investment were restricted by law. Large commercial banks favored radical deregulation, since their superior resources would allow them to dominate in a "free market." Thrifts wanted partial deregulation but also some continued protection, which they justified by citing their historical role as lenders to low-income home buyers. Garn–St. Germain was a compromise between these two sectors of finance and, to some extent, the worst of both worlds, allowing "S&Ls to become involved in speculative, high-risk investments while simultaneously positioning the state to bail out the industry" (p. 39).

Chapter 3 profiles two notorious results of deregulation. Columbia Savings and Loan took advantage of the new rules to speculate in high-risk junk bonds, dazzled by the manipulative pitch of Michael Milken; it failed spectacularly when the artificially inflated junk-bond market collapsed. Silverado Bank was similarly burned by its wildly speculative investments in commercial real estate. Both cases involved misappropriation of funds and "creative accounting" by management. But the authors emphasize that most of the losses were the result of *legal* investments made possible by deregulation and seen by the thrifts as *necessary* in the new competitive environment. The S&L crisis was not primarily the result of mismanagement, rather "the consequence of a radical shift in federal regulatory policy that the banks themselves participated in changing" (p. 42), which "contradictorily amplified both the level of investment risk in the banking industry and the level of corporate welfare" (p. 64). Chapter 4 further traces this contradictory state project through an account of the FIRREA, the bailout legislation that was a response to the havoc created by earlier deregulation. Once again, the policy outcome was a compromise between various segments of finance capital; the S&L industry would not be allowed to collapse, but the terms for its restructuring were most beneficial to commercial banks. Consumers, communities, and small depositors were least represented in the political process.

There are several weaknesses in the book. The authors sometimes fall prey to an *excessive* accommodationism in which all factors seem equally

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important in explaining political outcomes; or, different factors (corporate mobilization, institutional legacies of past policy, activist political organization) are emphasized at different points in the narrative of an event without adequate theoretical integration at the end. A more serious problem is the disjunction between the theoretical project of the book and the empirical evidence presented. There is much useful information about conflicting interests of various parties and differential benefits of major legislation. But there is little discussion of the actual decision-making processes of policy formation (e.g., corporate lobbying tactics, links between policy planning groups and the state, the rationale of committee chairs and other key officials). This is all the more frustrating because the authors spend a whole chapter on a quantitative analysis of the role of bank political action committee (PAC) contributions in passing Garn–St. Germain. While a relatively useful contribution to the PAC literature, the findings are statistically weak and ambiguous. Further, the authors seem unaware that the "population analytic" methodology of this chapter may be at odds with their own "contingency" framework and can shed little light on causal processes in comparison to "mere historical description" in an historical case study like this one.

In short, *Corporate Welfare Policy* does not resolve the theoretical debates over the capitalist state. But it does provide an interesting and timely historical account of key legislation affecting the most important sector of the U.S. economy.

Farewell to the Factory: Auto Workers in the Late Twentieth Century. By Ruth Milkman. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xiii+234. $45.00 (cloth); $14.95 (paper).

David Gartman
University of South Alabama

Sociologists have long been enamored with auto workers, but recently the focus of our affection has shifted. In the prosperous postwar years, they were exemplars of the alienated worker, toiling away at mindless meaningless tasks for mere monetary compensation negotiated by a cooperative union. But recent decades have brought layoffs and plant closings, and academics who once criticized alienated jobs now lament their loss, as well as the decline of "strong unions." Ruth Milkman's important new study of restructuring in the auto industry reminds us that workers still hate these monotonous regimented jobs and are not nearly as reluctant as some academics to bid them farewell.

Milkman's intriguing insights are based on a case study of the General Motors (GM) assembly plant at Linden, New Jersey. She first places her case within the postwar "industrial accord," in which unions consented to monotonous regimented jobs in return for growing wages and benefits. Although this brought a general peace in the war of labor and manage-

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ment, Milkman argues convincingly that it did not prevent continuing shop floor skirmishes, since workers hated their jobs and the degrading managerial structure. This shop floor conflict intensified at Linden and elsewhere in the late 1970s but was undermined in the 1980s by corporate restructuring in response to the industry's competitive crisis.

When Milkman began her study in 1984, the Linden plant was in the midst of a critical restructuring of both technology and labor relations. Weakened by its contractual concession of investment and technology decisions to management, the United Auto Workers was ill prepared to fight and beat a strategic retreat, seeking merely to protect the jobs and incomes of senior workers. To this end the union negotiated with GM the Job Opportunity Bank Security program, which provided for job transfers, retraining, and voluntary retirement for a lump-sum payment. Milkman studied, at the union's request, the latter "buyout" component, tracking a random sample of the retiring workers from 1987 to 1991. She finds, perhaps surprisingly, that most of these workers were happy to be rid of auto work, citing concerns about job security and dislike of work as their main reasons for leaving. A minority, composed mainly of the self-employed, were better off financially. But even among the majority who earned less after leaving GM, most were happier in their new jobs. Milkman cautions, however, that these rosy results are probably not typical of displaced industrial workers, for her respondents voluntarily left, were disproportionately young, and entered a strong New Jersey economy.

Milkman also studied—by written questionnaire, focus groups, and open-ended interviews—the workers who remained to work at the "New Linden." Ultimately, she finds, they wound up just as frustrated and resentful as under the old system, maybe more so. The plant underwent a technological overhaul based on microelectronic automation. But in refutation of the cheery prognostications of post-Fordist pundits like Michael Piore and Charles Sabel, Milkman concludes that most workers lost skill. The new technology did require new responsibilities and skills, but most of these were incorporated into already skilled trades, leaving production workers with less skilled and more monotonous work. Skill polarization was the result. The outcome of the new labor relations system, called "jointness," was even more frustrating. Workers underwent an 80 hour course to train them for the new authority structure that promised greater respect and participation. Most workers were excited about the promised changes and eagerly participated. But once back on the shop floor, they encountered recalcitrant first-line supervisors, who quickly reverted to their authoritarian ways under production pressure from top management. Workers unfulfilled expectations for a more humane workplace left them more bitter than ever.

Ruth Milkman's study is a well-researched, lucidly written, and revealing addition to the literature on auto workers and industrial restructuring. But at times the lack of a broader, more global, perspective makes her conclusions about the future of auto work both too optimistic and too

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pessimistic. Her case makes her too optimistic about the fate of industrial workers in transition to a postindustrial economy. She argues that her workers testify at least to the possibility of a smooth, beneficial transition under certain conditions—presumably a generous union or state program of training and income security. But she fails to recognize that deindustrialization undermines these very policies that ease the transition by sapping the political strength of labor on which they rest. Conversely, Milkman is too pessimistic about the possibility of retaining these industrial jobs and making them better. Like her auto workers and their union, she can conceive of no alternatives to the Taylorist division of labor and regimentation that renders these jobs undesirable. But other studies have shown that the structure of industrial work is not inevitable but a socially contingent artifact. Neither is the decline of such jobs inevitable, as she contends (p. 136). To be sure, the loss of some jobs results from technological upgrading, but many have also been lost due to corporate outsourcing to low-wage nonunion workers in less developed regions and countries. Until we see all aspects of industrial restructuring as social and political strategies, not economic inevitabilities, unions, politicians, and academics may be far too eager to wave farewell to the factory.

Field, Forest, and Family: Women's Work and Power in Rural Laos. By Carol J. Ireson. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996. Pp. xxiii+285. $60.00.

Rae Lesser Blumberg
University of California, San Diego

"Women travel more than men. They are selling and buying. They keep the money. They are responsible for the economy. They give money to their husbands when husbands ask for it" (p. 201). For those who view patriarchy as universal, this statement by a village leader concerning women entrepreneurs who have been able to use a new road in rural Laos to consolidate and enhance their economic power will seem an anomaly. The fact that among certain ethnic groups in Southeast Asia, women have substantial microlevel power based on (1) control of economic resources and (2) a bilateral or "matri-focused" kinship system is not widely appreciated outside narrow circles of specialists.

Now, Carol Ireson helps fill this lacuna while making two significant contributions (1) to academic knowledge about the determinants and consequences of gender stratification and (2) to the field of gender and development. Her theoretically grounded and empirically extraordinary case study focuses on Laotian women from three ethnic groups varying in degree of gender stratifaction: the relatively gender-egalitarian lowland Lao, the somewhat patriarchal and impoverished Khmu of the midlands, and the extremely patriarchal Hmong of the highlands. She organizes her study around three time periods—(*a*) before the rise of a socialist

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government in 1975 (the "traditional" system), (*b*) during the heyday of command economy/socialist policies (1975–88), and (*c*) after the onset of economic liberalization in 1988. Given this comparative framework, she is able to show clearly how changing macrolevel policies can change the lives and fortunes of men and women. In each of the three periods, there were winners and losers, depending on gender, ethnicity, and economic level.

Traditionally, the three ethnic groups form an ordinal scale of gender stratification, from low to high. The ethnic Lao (closely related to the people of Northeast Thailand) are a generally matrilocal, group that occupies most of the best lowland rice paddy land. Women traditionally have enjoyed substantial economic autonomy and respect at the micro level, usually controlling more land than men, keeping the household money, and enjoying equality in decision making. The Lao are the largest and dominant group and fit the general picture of the main lowland groups of Southeast Asia—complementarity in gender relations and "relatively high status" for women. The patrilocal Khmu are the poorest people in the country, with a recent history of subjugation and serfdom. The patrilineal, patrilocal, and extremely patriarchal Hmong, for whom subordination of women is a central tenet of male ideology and behavior, raise opium and use ecologically destructive methods of cultivation for their other crops. In all three, women are key actors in cultivation, animal husbandry, and forest products. What varies—in the same low to high sequence of Lao, Khmu, Hmong—is the extent to which they control what they produce.

The first five years of the socialist period brought a brief suppression of small-scale commerce that most hurt Lao women, own-account traders par excellence. Meanwhile, socialist ideology proclaimed women's equality as well as the importance of their labor. But socialist practice resulted in almost all-male control of the political economy, from the top—government and party—to the bottom—leadership of the cooperatives. Still, during the brief heyday of the co-ops, Lao women benefited from the socialization of reproductive tasks (e.g., child care). They also received work points even for their labor in paddy rice, the only part of the microlevel economy that traditionally was under male supervision (by the senior man in the household). And Khmu and Hmong women benefited from the stress on education, including girls' schooling.

Economic liberalization and an increase in international development assistance since 1988 have created new opportunities for some, while increasing economic differentiation. Winners usually have been those who already were somewhat better off. But even some Khmu and Hmong women have benefited economically. And the Lao Women's Union has been able to capture some of the new donor aid and evolve from a mere party auxiliary to a more respected and powerful vehicle for development assistance.

Few researchers can match Ireson's credentials for intensive knowledge of her people. As discussed in her preface, the book represents the

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culmination of work in Laos ranging over more than 25 years, including five years of fieldwork (1967–69, 1984–86, 1988–89) as well as several shorter visits. Most of this work involved development project planning, implementation, and evaluation. And most was done at a time when researchers from nonsocialist countries almost never had access to the country and there were no Laotian social scientists carrying out research.

Ireson characterizes her approach as follows: "Since economic power is a central determinant of women's power, I focus particularly on changes in women's work and women's control over resources" (p. 3). Since Laos is 85% rural, her focus is on the countryside. Her theoretical framework comes from three sources: First, she introduces my theory of gender stratification, in which relative control of economic resources by men and women at various "nested" levels, ranging from the couple to the state, is seen as the most important (although not the sole) variable affecting the level of gender equality, defined in terms of control of "life options." Second, she draws on Gita Sen and Caren Grown's analysis of how poor women's subordination often has been intensified by development. Both Blumberg and Sen and Grown, she notes, emphasize "economic explanations of women's power and subordination, while acknowledging the impact of politics and ideology on women's power" (p. 3). Finally, she incorporates Caroline Moser's emphasis on women's creative initiatives in the face of difficulties.

One of the book's few weaknesses is that Ireson does not explicitly refer to any of the three guiding theories again after chapter 1, even when they clearly are relevant (i.e., her findings match some of their hypotheses). As an interested party, I found myself keeping an informal scorecard of all the times her data provided empirical support for hypotheses from my gender stratification theory (as they do also for key tenets of Sen and Grown's and Moser's approaches). But although the book can be seen as a significant contribution to both gender stratification and gender and development theory, readers themselves must extract the connections between her findings and the guiding theoretical frameworks. Regardless, this is a major and useful work.

Gender, Equality, and Welfare States. By Diane Sainsbury. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. xiv+258. $59.95 (cloth); $19.95 (paper).

Jill Quadagno
Florida State University

Political theorists have long recognized that the social programs that make up the welfare state not only provide services and income security but also organize social relations. Welfare states are key institutions in

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the structuring of class and the social order. At issue is what kind of stratification system the welfare state creates.

The first generation of welfare state theorists concentrated on how the welfare state influenced the class structure. Comparative studies demonstrating significant variations in levels of spending and in forms of social provision led to efforts to classify nations along a typology of "welfare state regimes." "Liberal" regimes are characterized by minimal intervention in the market and a reliance on means-tested social assistance. Need is the basic principle of eligibility, and benefits are designed to maintain existing patterns of stratification. In "conservative" regimes benefits are based on participation in the labor market, and social programs maintain traditional status relations by providing distinct programs for different class and status groups. Finally, in "universal" regimes benefits are bestowed on the basis of citizenship. They promote status equality by endowing all citizens with similar rights, regardless of their social class or their occupation.

The second generation of welfare state theorists were feminists who criticized class-based models for failing to recognize that beneficiaries have many relationships to the welfare state beside that of worker and that the ranking of counties in these typologies might differ if gender was added to the equation. Feminist analyses have highlighted how the welfare state, through its public policies, ideologies, and organizational principles have reproduced the gendered division of labor and male domination.

In her theoretically innovative and carefully researched book, *Gender, Equality, and Welfare States,* Diane Sainsbury also challenges the core premises of class-based models of the welfare state. Class-based theorists, she contends, wrongly presume that a single basis of entitlement predominates in each regime type, while ignoring women's entitlements as wives and mothers. Her challenge is not only to class-based theories, however, for the feminist emphasis on the two-tier welfare state welfare model, which solely considers need or labor market status as bases of entitlement, also neglects the principle of "care."

In her comparative analysis of Great Britain, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United States, Sainsbury asks two questions: What difference do variations across welfare states make for women and within each country? How do women's benefits compare to those of men? Sainsbury evaluates the main bases of entitlement—work, need, citizenship, and care—and finds that classed-based typologies of regime types often wrongly group countries on their stratifying effects. For example, Sweden and the Netherlands are typically classified as "universalistic" welfare states, although along several gender-relevant dimensions, they represent polar opposites. In the Netherlands, benefits tend to be organized around the breadwinner model whereas in Sweden they are based on individual entitlement independent of marital status. She also finds that in every country benefits based on labor market status disadvantage women relative to

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men, that benefits based on need may enhance the status of women if they are accompanied by an ideology that recognizes the right to a basic minimum income, and that women fare best when citizenship is the basis of entitlement.

Most of Sainsbury's empirical evidence regarding women's access to benefits and level of benefits is presented for 1980, which, she argues, represents the product of the conjunction of historical forces that created the mature welfare states. After 1980, she contends, most nations began to reevaluate their social programs and cut benefits, and indeed her final, very interesting chapter evaluates the impact of welfare state retrenchment on gender equality. The problem with using 1980 as the benchmark year for analyzing the quality of benefits is that more recent data on female labor force participation are presented throughout the book, making the analysis appear dated. At times Sainsbury also appears unduly pessimistic. For example, in the United States, pension coverage among men aged 21–36 has declined from 62% in 1979 to only 49% in 1993, while there has been an increase among women in pension coverage from 46% to 48% in the same period. Why have women been able to increase their access to this form of fiscal welfare in an era of retrenchment? What also obscures the impact of recent changes is the fact that the evidence is rarely presented by cohort.

Despite these minor problems, *Gender, Equality, and Welfare States* represents a monumental achievement in scholarship on the welfare state, informed by a theoretically innovative discussion of the bases of entitlement and an empirically rich comparative analysis. It is likely to be thoroughly debated and widely cited.

Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work. By Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1997. Pp. xxxi+305. $42.50 (cloth); $19.95 (paper).

Frances Fox Piven
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A stranger to the United States might well raise a query that is rarely heard here, especially since the campaign against welfare began. At the average cash grant of $383 a month for a family, and even taking into account food stamps and Medicaid, how can these families possibly survive? The same query applies to families that rely on the minimum wage earnings of a lone parent, whose income is a little higher but who also shoulders the additional expenses that work makes necessary.

So, why do we not see more homelessness, hunger, and visible desperation among these families? *Making Ends Meet* begins to answer the question. It presents a unique set of data that describe the household economies of poor families headed by women, the diverse strategies that the

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mothers employ to survive, and the hardships that the families nevertheless endure.

Edin and Lein interviewed 214 welfare mothers and 164 working poor mothers in four cities. Most of these women, including those who worked, relied to some degree on government benefits. Since any additional income, no matter how irregular, can jeopardize these benefits, survey data are usually unreliable. In the effort to get accurate information, Edin and Lein made special efforts to win the confidence of the women they interviewed, and the efforts appear to have succeeded. Their sampling method relied on friendly intermediaries to gain access to respondents, who were then interviewed repeatedly over the course of the study. As trust increased, information on household income and expenditure patterns, and the coping stratagems of the mothers, was gradually pieced together. The empathy that made this strategy successful also shines through in their respectful accounts of the economic travails of the women they interviewed.

What emerges is a portrait of welfare-reliant mothers quite different from the usual caricature of slothful and helpless women tied to the dole by a syndrome called dependency. These women are preoccupied with the well-being of their children, and they are resourceful and enterprising. How else, indeed, could they master the challenge of making up an average gap of over $300 between their family expenses of $876 a month and their benefits of $565? On the one hand, they spend money extremely carefully. On the other, they draw on their networks of friends, family, and boyfriends, on churches and social agencies, and on earnings from unreported work to make up the gap in their tight budgets. Even so, their situation is dangerously insecure, and many report periods of serious hardship.

These women differed from the caricature of welfare addiction in another way. They had on average 4.2 years of work experience, and 84% had worked in the past five years. The large majority wanted to work again. But rational calculation made them conclude that they could not afford to leave welfare for the low-wage job market. Instead, most believed that they had first to acquire education or job skills, and many were using their time on welfare to do just that.

Edin and Lein's data also illuminate the economic realities that underlie this assessment by welfare mothers. Their sample of working mothers was limited to those earning less than $8 an hour. On average, those who worked had higher incomes. But they also had higher expenses, largely because of work-related costs—child care, reduced rent subsidies, transportation, medical care, clothing, and so on. The mothers who worked were usually able to do so only because of some special resource, such as a relative willing to care for the children. In any case, Edin and Lein's data show that these working mothers had to resort to many of the same stratagems as used by welfare-reliant mothers in order to make ends meet: taking on extra work, relying on friends, relatives, and boyfriends, and turning to social agencies for occasional handouts. Even so, these

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women reported higher levels of hardship than women on welfare. Moreover, their jobs were typically insecure and rarely promised much advancement over time. And working mothers worried about the supervision of their children. The women who worked despite all this seemed to do so mainly because of the way it made them feel about themselves. One consequence of the furor over welfare is that the stigma associated with welfare has intensified, so that more women are likely to choose the hardships of low-wage work, even at the expense of their children's well-being.

The bearing of these findings on current policy disputes seems clear. Edin and Lein found little evidence of a culture of dependency. Instead, both mothers who relied mainly on welfare and those who relied mainly on work understood their limited economic alternatives and coped as best they could, juggling and finagling and sometimes cheating to keep their families afloat. Second, almost all of the mothers Edin and Lein interviewed had moved in and out of the labor force. Most welfare-reliant mothers had worked and expected to work again; most wage-reliant mothers had been on welfare. Either way, their economic situation was difficult and precarious—even more difficult for working poor mothers than for those on welfare.

The policy moral that Edin and Lein draw is to call for substantial wage supplements and high-quality training programs so that work really does pay for these families. They shrink from drawing another moral, probably because the political climate is so discouraging. Nevertheless, their data include powerful evidence that, flaws notwithstanding, the welfare system was a lifeline for poor women and their children.

Turning Back: The Retreat from Racial Justice in American Thought and Policy. By Stephen Steinberg. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. Pp xi+276. $25.00 (cloth); $15.00 (paper).

Mary E. Pattillo
University of Michigan

Stephen Steinberg argues that contemporary scholarship on race and poverty lacks "spine." Because white Americans do not wish to confront the issue of racism, liberals—black and white alike—have taken racial discrimination out of their explanatory models and antiracist measures off of their policy agendas. Liberal waffling has led to conservative ideological sway, resulting in policies that ignore the "institutional inequalities that constitute the enduring legacy of slavery" (p. 219). Steinberg elaborates on these claims by taking to task the theoretical assertions and empirical research of various prominent scholars. Little-known quotations give added passion to Steinberg's critique. For instance, he quotes writer James Baldwin: "The impulse in American society, as far as I can tell from my experience in it, has essentially been to ignore me when it could,

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and then when it couldn't, to intimidate me; and when that failed, to make concessions" (p. 111).

The crisp, chronological organization of *Turning Back* makes it a useful tool for teaching courses on the development of racial scholarship in the social sciences. Using Thomas Kuhn's model of paradigm shifts (*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [University of Chicago Press, 1985]), Steinberg defines three eras in race scholarship. Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* (Harper and Row, 1944) departed from biological determinism. Myrdal showed that "the Negro problem" was actually an American problem deeply rooted in an unjust caste system. Steinberg praises Myrdal (and his colleagues) for exposing the indignities that blacks suffered at the hands of whites in the North and South. Yet Steinberg believes that Myrdal was amiss in his overall analysis. Myrdal's simplification of racism to a moral dilemma within and among whites minimized the material deprivation and social stigma experienced by African-Americans. Because this strain of liberal social science diverted attention from the real circumstances of blacks, it was unable to predict the impending social upheavals.

The 1960s constituted a paradigm shift to the "scholarship of confrontation." Whereas prior emphasis was on racist *beliefs,* the new paradigm stressed the racist *actions* of whites, which had visible consequences. Concepts developed in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, such as "institutionalized racism" and "internal colonialism," became staples of scholarly discourse. Autobiographical reflections by political activists were best-sellers. For a short time, the nation accepted responsibility for the effects of racism.

On the heels of this scholarship of confrontation, however, came a backlash that has lasted to the present. Steinberg is most agitated by liberal complicity in this backlash. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan are two prominent targets of Steinberg's critique. Through their roles as public intellectual and Washington bureaucrat respectively, Glazer and Moynihan influenced popular, academic, and governmental understandings of the causes of black poverty. Together they "shifted the analytical focus from racism to culture, and shifted the blame from societal institutions onto blacks themselves" (p. 106). With this shift came a retreat from the race-based policies that were the victories of the previous paradigm. Steinberg also indicts William Julius Wilson for contributing to the backlash. Because Wilson is African-American, he provides the backlash with "an indispensable mark of legitimacy" (p. 126).

Steinberg occasionally falls victim to the dangers inherent in scholarly criticism. It is standard procedure to abstract the central thesis of a book or author and then attack the abstract. Yet, the object of criticism is never as simpleminded as the abstract suggests. Hence, while Steinberg presents Wilson as one of the liberal underwriters of anti–affirmative action sentiment, Wilson's own work suggests the opposite. Wilson asks in *The Truly Disadvantaged* (University of Chicago, 1987), "Does this mean that targeted programs of any kind would necessarily be excluded from

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a package highlighting universal programs of reform?" He answers, "On the contrary, as long as a racial division of labor exists and racial minorities are disproportionately concentrated in low-paying positions, antidiscrimination and affirmative action programs will be needed" (p. 154). Conservatives may twist Wilson's arguments for their own use, but this does not negate Wilson's explicitly pro–affirmative action stance. Wilson does argue that race-specific policies are not enough. But so does Steinberg, whose policy proposals include "creating new jobs in both the public and private sectors, providing subsidies to employers to hire and train the hard-core unemployed, and launching programs of economic development and social reconstruction targeted for poverty areas and racial ghettos" (p. 201).

Despite areas of agreement, Steinberg is correct in that scholars who are motivated by realpolitik run the risk of overcompensation. They "subsume" race to class in order to propose policies that are palatable to the white public. There is reason to be skeptical that such universal policies will reach the most disadvantaged blacks. Thus, books such as *Turning Back* are vital for reminding scholars, students, and policy makers of the particular obstacles that African-Americans face because of past and present racism.

The Politics of Preference: Democratic Institutions and Affirmative Action in the United States and India. By Sunita Parikh. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997. Pp. ix+230. $39.50.

John Echeverri-Gent
University of Virginia

Gabriel Almond's famous essay "Separate Tables" (*PS* 21, no. 4 [Fall 1988]) criticized the discipline of political science for being driven by competing theoretical and methodological perspectives that impoverished it by impeding eclecticism. Sunita Parikh's book offers a provocative response to Almond's critique. It develops an analytical framework that synthesizes comparative historical and rational choice methodologies. She deploys this analytical framework to explain the development and persistence of affirmative action programs in the United States and India. Parikh's study concludes that, in large heterogeneous societies with democratic political systems, politicians will introduce affirmative action programs when they need to expand their coalitions and when groups historically suffering from discrimination mobilize to become strategic constituencies.

Parikh's synthesis of comparative historical and rational choice methods demonstrates that there is no need to be prisoners of the trade-off between thick description and theoretical abstraction. The rational choice approach lacks a theory of preference formation. Its impetus to stylize context often distorts the historical circumstances in which strategic inter-

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action occurs. Parikh argues that we can use historical analysis to describe the values that shape the preferences of actors. It also can illuminate the specific incentives and constraints that influence strategic action. However, comparative historical study lacks criteria for limiting the variables under examination. Parikh contends that we can use rational choice to select a parsimonious set of variables that become imbued with meaning when they are embedded in their historical context.

Parikh's study begins with a description of the cultural and political context in which affirmative action programs were established in the United States and India. In both countries, efforts to redress the historical denial of rights to minority groups were obliged to navigate political cultures with conflicting commitments to individual rights and social and political equity. Parikh contends that, in light of these cultural contradictions, it is no wonder that affirmative action programs are so controversial. She describes how historical change increased the political power of African-Americans in the United States and *dalits* or "untouchables" in India at the same time that changes exogenous to majority-minority relations—in the United States World War II and the onset of the Cold War, in India, changes in British colonial policy—made dominant groups more receptive to concessions to deprived minorities.

Parikh's analysis of the evolution of affirmative action in the United States uses simple spatial models of policy making to explain key shifts in strategy. Specialists in American politics will not find much new in her sparse prose even though her analysis utilizes considerable primary research. Parikh's most interesting contention is that the evolution of affirmative action had little to do with changes in public opinion. There was no groundswell of public support leading to the introduction and expansion of affirmative action, and there was not enough erosion of public support to explain the rollback under Ronald Reagan and George Bush. Instead, Parikh offers a series of models demonstrating that the evolution of affirmative action was driven by the way changes of key political authorities altered the equilibriums of their strategic interaction. Gaining support for a position on affirmative action in two of the three branches of the federal government will enable a politician to advance her position far beyond the "constraints" of public opinion.

After contending that affirmative action in India was initiated by the British at least in part to sow division within the ranks of the independence movement, Parikh focuses on efforts to expand affirmative action following independence. Her comparison of initiatives in the states of Karnataka and Gujarat supports her contention that affirmative action programs are introduced when political competition motivates leaders to expand their coalitions. The Indian case also includes a discussion of V. P. Singh's tumultuous effort in 1990 to expand affirmative action to "other backward classes" at the national level. Here, Parikh provides little more than a cursory outline of events. She omits any analysis of how the subsequent government under Narasimha Rao resolved the controversy.

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Despite the promise of her analytical framework, Parikh's study limits her analysis of political culture and historical context to the macro level instead of linking it to the micro level of strategic action. There is a lot of support in this book for the argument that affirmative action has been used primarily as a means to achieve political advantage—perhaps most interesting is the fact that its supporters include not only those like Lyndon Johnson and Jawaharlal Nehru with a commitment to redressing past injustices but also Richard Nixon and the British colonial government who used affirmative action to divide their opponents. Nevertheless, cogently substantiating the hypothesis that politicians are motivated exclusively by their political advantage requires a thorough study of the actors' understanding of their context and their ranking of their perceived alternatives. Parikh's contention that affirmative action programs expand coalitions by signaling support for deprived minorities also seems persuasive, but I was left wondering why politicians initiate and expand affirmative action to signal their support instead of other measures. This ambitious book would have better achieved its objectives had its empirical research been more assiduous in illuminating how historical conjunctures and cultural values shaped strategies of the key players in the affirmative action game.

The Search for Political Community: American Activists Reinventing Commitment. By Paul Lichterman. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. ix+279. $54.95 (cloth); $19.95 (paper).

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Northwestern University

At a time when criticisms abound concerning eroding communal ties and declining political commitments made by Americans to one another, Paul Lichterman offers a compelling account challenging the assumptions behind these criticisms. Drawing on participant observation and survey research, this study greatly deepens our understanding of the commitment practices of activists. It is crucial reading for those interested in culture and social movements.

Lichterman questions the pervasive communitarian view that an emphasis on self-fulfillment (what he terms "personalism") is incompatible with a sense of obligation toward others. The power of his argument lies both in its demonstrating that personalism can *strengthen* activism and that the communitarian path to activism has shortcomings of its own. He situates personalized politics within a social movement culture that has become institutionalized since the 1960s and draws upon the "radical democratic views" of Jürgen Habermas and Chantal Mouffe in locating his theoretical contributions. One of the most illuminating of these contributions is his rendering of commitment practices, which new social move-

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ment scholars implicitly overlook in studying the construction of movement identities, as central to this identity formation.

Lichterman demonstrates keen skill for doing ethnography and in several places shows why participant observation is an essential method for extracting the commitment practices that movement activists routinely take for granted. He compares three different practices employed by activists in the environmental movement. Ridge Greens and Seaview Greens are each a case of personalism, Hillviewers against Toxics (HAT) is a case of communitarianism, and Airdale Citizens for Environmental Sanity (ACES) is a hybrid of both. Although Lichterman offers interesting insight about ACES since it is a relatively unique example of a suburban movement organization, this case generally recedes from his larger analysis about the contrasting commitment practices of the Greens and HAT.

Chapter 1 lays out the book's theoretical framework and then documents the pervasiveness of personalism within American culture. Lichterman then devotes a chapter each to his three cases. Chapter 5 is an analysis of the links between activists' class backgrounds and their proclivities for either a personalist or a communitarian anchoring of their political commitments. He artfully paints differences between the Greens and HAT in terms of how their relations toward work and personal life become embedded in these respective modes of activism. The Greens saw their activism as defined as much by the environmentally safe toothpaste they used as by their formal movement involvement. HAT conversely did not morally construe its activism as filtering through all aspects of their lives.

Linking these data to Pierre Bourdieu's theories about cultural inequality, Lichterman argues that the mostly white members of the Greens possess the cultural capital to construct political commitments from personalism, capital that the black members of HAT have not similarly acquired during their lives. He does not view personalism as a "better" activist path but regards the two commitment cultures as having different strengths and weaknesses. His agenda is then to illustrate why each practice contains barriers impeding a multicultural, cross-class activist politics from forming in the United States. He concludes by calling for the development of a "translation ethic" linking movement activists (pp. 227–30).

This study provides the reader with solid evidence for reconceptualizing traditional paths to political commitment. Yet, its larger significance still remains a bit uncertain. For example, Lichterman does not specify where he wishes to situate his work with respect to the extensive debate fueled by Robert Putnam's article, "Bowling Alone" (*Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 [1995]: 65–78). Putnam embraces communitarianism in arguing that Americans now have fewer networks in which to embed social commitments. While Lichterman's analysis questions the necessity of such networks for cultivating activism, it is uncertain whether he addi-

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tionally wants to claim that social capital is not actually declining because personalism can foster such commitment.

Indeed, it is not entirely clear what the reader should take away from a study that seeks to equate movement activism with a larger argument about how people establish commitments to one another. There were relatively few participants in each of the organizations Lichterman examined, suggesting that only a small percentage of Americans express commitments to others through activism. Yet, the communitarian critique inspiring this book looks at declining commitments across all realms of social life, not just those that are overtly political. What promise might personalism hold for establishing the various expressions of commitments—for example, to a spouse, a child, a religious community—that Bellah et al. discuss in their influential study informing Lichterman's work (*Habits of the Heart* [University of California Press, 1985])? Is personalism as likely to breed commitment in these realms as in social movements?

These are provocative questions that Lichterman's study raises. The mark of fine scholarship is its being able to say something new and significant and, in so doing, stimulate important future research agendas. Paul Lichterman has succeeded on both of these fronts.

The Persistent Activist: How Peace Commitment Develops and Survives. By James Downton, Jr., and Paul Wehr. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997. Pp. xi+186. $50.00 (cloth); $17.00 (paper).

Hearts and Minds: The Controversy over Laboratory Animals. By Julian McAllister Groves. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997. Pp. viii+230.

Bert Klandermans
Free University

Some movements emerge because of outrage about moral principles that have been violated. Participants in such movements are not motivated by a possible improvement of their own situation or the situation of the group they identify with, but by a feeling that important values are violated and that government should be blamed for not taking appropriate action. They feel moral indignation about the government's failure to protect animal life or nature from polluting industries or technology, moral indignation about war or devastating weapon systems, moral indignation about apartheid or exploitation of the Third World.

Who are the people who participate in these movements and how do they become involved? These are the questions Downton and Wehr and Groves try to answer for two such "movements of shame" as Groves calls them: the peace movement and the animal rights movement, respectively.

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The two books have in common that both build their argument on in-depth interviews.

Downton and Wehr more specifically try to understand the sustained participation in peace movement organizations in two cities in Colorado. They distinguish between persisters (10 of their interviewees), who have been continuously active in peace work for at least five years, shifters (4 of their interviewees), who left the peace action for another social cause, and dropouts (6 of their interviewees), who left activism altogether. Most of their argument concerns the first group, the persisters, but throughout the book the authors try to contrast the persisters with the two other groups.

Downton and Wehr start with a discussion of collective action theories that is so short that it is hardly possible to get beyond stereotypical pictures of new social movement theory, rational choice theory, and social psychological theories. As long as the stereotype has a kernel of truth this is perhaps acceptable; in the case of the social psychological theories, however, once again the social psychology of protest is equated to malintegration theories. In general I was surprised to find hardly any reference to recent social movement literature. None of the recent debates on the social construction of meaning, political process, or collective identity seemed to have reached the authors, although some of these debates would have certainly been informative for their subject.

The lack of theoretical anchoring is, however, certainly compensated by the careful modeling the authors undertake of the processes they attempt to understand. The process of mobilization is broken down into two steps: first, the creation of peace-oriented beliefs, a process that the authors largely define as controlled by socialization influences, be it in the family, formal education, the church, or social movements proper; second, the transformation of this ideological inclination into attitudinal availability. In a supply-demand type of interplay, availability and opportunity act to produce action participation.

Yet, mobilization per se is not the phenomenon that concerns Downton and Wehr most; indeed what they want to understand is the development and maintenance of commitment. In my view, this is what makes the book a valuable contribution to the literature on social movements. The authors observe correctly that sustained participation is a neglected subject in that literature.

Persisters are those who develop a commitment that lasts. The authors emphasize that the allegiance of the activist not only concerns the movement but its ideology, organization, leadership, and the movement community at large. Commitment fluctuates, and when a bond with one of these sectors is broken, the result may be a fairly quick exit from the group as the cases of the shifters and dropouts show.

Downton and Wehr discuss the significance of social support and cross pressure for enduring participation and conclude that the way competing responsibilities are handled are the main difference between persisters on the one hand and shifters and dropouts on the other. Unlike the others,

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persisters "live their commitment," that is, they rearrange their lives such that responsibilities no longer compete, for example, by taking a job that fits with their activist commitments. Persisters also understand how to cope with burnout. They know the art of refraining from working to the point of exhaustion, of caring for personal needs as well as movement demands, and of taking time to play and create.

Groves approaches his subject, the controversy over laboratory animals, from a different angle. What makes Groves's study interesting is that he not only interviewed movement participants but also their opponents, researchers who are using animals. The author tries carefully to give actors on both sides of the controversy the opportunity to explain their motives, convictions, and emotions. This is not always easy, as is obvious from several passages in the book.

Most important, Groves's book is about emotions; it reads as a plea to move emotions to center stage in social movement research. Building on Thomas Scheff's theory on the emotional dynamics in conflicts, he tries to understand the emotions involved in becoming and being active in a social movement. Shame and pride are pictured as the two emotions that are involved in movement participation. Movements mobilize the shame already within us, Groves argues, reasoning like Downton and Wehr that the inclination to participate in this kind of movement develops through long-term processes of socialization. Yet, Groves goes a long way to emphasize that it is not just emotions that make his interviewees tick. On the contrary, they are very much aware that emotions do not win arguments and that they must find rational ways to be emotional about animals. Both heart *and* minds play a role.

Groves's work is based on interviews with 20 activists who participated in various groups that were protesting animal research and interviews with 20 research supporters, all from the same university town. After having described how animal protection became institutionalized, the author gives a careful account of the conflict as it evolved over the years. Interestingly, he demonstrates that the conflict is not simply a pro- or antiscience conflict. To be sure, some animal rights activists were skeptical of science, but others were embedded in science and technology through their occupations. Similarly, it is not the activists who love animals against the researchers who do not care. Groves's study makes very clear that both sides are ambivalent about animal use and looks at how activists and researchers dealt with their ambivalences.

The controversy evolved from one about compassion for pets into a controversy about the rights of animals and scientific progress. A clear linkage of this part of the argument to the literature on public discourse would have certainly strengthened the argument. Indeed, this is a more general weakness of this study. Groves's book is rich in descriptive details but analytically poor. As a consequence, one wonders whether the insights developed can be generalized to other movements. I assume they can, but without a theoretical framework, it is difficult for the reader to decide how. Ethnographic or qualitative methods are no reason to re-

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frain from such modeling as the work of Downton and Wehr demonstrates.

Identity, Interest and Action: A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War. By Erik Ringmar. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. xii+236. $59.95.

Theodore K. Rabb
Princeton University

Erik Ringmar's study is two books in one. Half of it explores the philosophical and theoretical problems raised by scholarly explanations of why people and nations go to war. The rest is a close analysis of the reasons for Sweden's invasion of the Holy Roman Empire (now Germany) in 1630. The purpose of the latter is not only to advance our understanding of an important historical event but also to provide a case study for Ringmar's argument about the larger theoretical question.

In essence, Ringmar believes that previous research, both on the specific case and on the general issue, has lacked persuasiveness because of its failure to pay attention to a crucial motive: the need to establish and gain recognition for national identity. Nations, like individuals, yearn for acceptance and respect. If doubted or challenged, especially when their distinctiveness or autonomy is in a formative stage, they will respond with violence. War becomes not a matter of gain, of logic, or of concrete interests, but a matter of emotion and psychological drive.

There is much of interest in this argument, especially in the single-mindedness with which it is pursued. Ringmar highlights the gaps in the theoretical literature between general constructs (of behavior or outlook) and specific policies or actions. At the same time, drawing on recent research into public spectacles and political mythmaking, he adds a valuable dimension to historical accounts of the policies of Sweden's kings. Ringmar focuses on Gustav Adolf, the charismatic monarch, who between 1611 and 1632 transformed a poor, backward, and threatened country into a major European power, and he emphasizes the ways in which Gustav Adolf convinced his ministers and the nation at large to support an aggressive war in Germany.

This is an oft told tale but never before has pride of place been given so exclusively to matters of self-definition, self-presentation, and rhetoric. In taking this approach, Ringmar relies heavily on recent work by literary and intellectual historians that deals with self-fashioning, image making, and display in Renaissance Europe. He describes this period as a "formative moment," when new definitions of both the self and the nation crystallized. As a result, individuals and peoples saw themselves as new and distinctive entities and hence reshaped the way they related to others.

For Sweden this was a particularly traumatic process because it had freed itself from Danish rule only in the 1520s, and the succession to the

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throne remained hotly disputed well into Gustav Adolf's reign. Accordingly, Ringmar believes the events of the 1610s and 1620s are best explained by the king's determination to win recognition and respect, both for his own right to the throne and for Sweden's importance in European affairs. And Gustav Adolf also persuaded his countrymen to feel, as he did, that they were being belittled or ignored in the international arena. Thus the Swedes went to war in Germany to establish and defend their national identity—as an ancient realm descended from the Goths, as a Baltic power, and as a champion of Protestantism. Religion, economics, and politics may have played a part in this decision, Ringmar argues, but only insofar as they contributed to the underlying quest for identity.

Is this the last word on a subject that, as Ringmar puts it (p. 14), has been the subject of "interminable academic fights"? Probably not. Having found his predecessors wanting, he claims he can "conclusively explain the Swedish action" (p. 95). All previous assessments, based on the "interests" of the actors, must be discarded in favor of his "identity-driven explanation" (p. 90). What is more likely is that his emphasis on self-promotion will merely add another element to the now standard analysis of Swedish motivation in Michael Roberts's magisterial works (*Gustavus Adolphus,* 2 vols. [Longmans, 1953, 1958] and *The Early Vasas* [Cambridge University Press, 1968]).

Ringmar makes the Danish and imperial refusal to admit intermediaries from Sweden to their peace conference at Lübeck in 1629 the keystone of his interpretation—the decisive insult to self-esteem that sparked aggression. Roberts offers a more measured and plausible account of this episode. And Roberts's argument that the Habsburgs had established a menacing military position on the southern shore of the Baltic, to which Sweden had every reason to respond, carries more conviction than Ringmar's dismissal of the reality of the threat. There are some small historical errors that do not undermine Ringmar's basic argument, but also two significant matters, inconsistent with his approach, which he fails to address: the treaty that Gustavus, Protestant champion, signed with Cardinal Richelieu and the distaste for war of another monarch facing disputed succession and identity. James I. Ringmar might also have questioned whether masques, iconography, and mythic histories were effective propaganda, fully understood by their audience and tempered the assertion that there is just "one" reason "that made Sweden act"—a reason that excludes all others and remains unchanging over time (p. 124).

In other words, Roberts remains the starting point for anyone who wants to know why Sweden went to war. Ringmar has given new sharpness and detail to one aspect of that story—a welcome contribution that adds a dimension, but not an all-encompassing explanation, to the historiography on Sweden and the theoretical literature on war.

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Criminal Law, Tradition and Legal Order: Crime and the Genius of Scots Law, 1747 to the Present. By Lindsay Farmer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. xi+207. $64.95.

Ian D. Willock
University of Dundee

Given the predominant readership of this periodical, one should begin by positioning *Criminal Law, Tradition and Legal Order* within the span of sociological method. It is in the Weberian tradition of *Verstehen.* It seeks to understand criminal justice through the actors who by virtue of their roles are able to impose meaning upon it, using their distinctive form of rationality. Empirical data are illustrative, rather than determinative, of the author's thesis.

Farmer is a graduate of Edinburgh University in Scots Law, who now, after periods in Strathclyde University and Florence, teaches at Birkbeck College, London. Throughout he has maintained an absorption with the "genius of Scots law." The present book is the culmination of a series of articles in which he has thrown out a challenge to the received wisdom, both among other academics and the Scots judges, as to its true character. But he purports to be drawing conclusions on the role of criminal law in any mature system. There must be doubts as to whether the features of Scots criminal justice, to which the central core of the book is devoted, are not too idiosyncratic to support such generalizations.

Farmer's central arguments would seem to run counter to the drawing of wide conclusions. He points out that criminal law always operates within boundaries—of territory, of history, and of its own rationality. Scotland's criminal law has been bound up with its sense of national identity. But that fact must cast doubt on its ability to supply enlightenment on transnational systems such as those derived from English common law or French law.

The key characteristic of Scots criminal law is that its principle is practice. The judges and advocates have, by their special processes of reasoning, constructed the law from case to case, in doing so purporting to enunciate the community values of Scotland and thus affirming its national identity.

After two scene-setting chapters, Farmer develops his thesis in three chapters that may seem somewhat technical and introverted to readers outside Scottish legal circles. In two he faces what must seem an obvious objection to the thesis that Scots criminal law is even more made by judges than the English common law. It is that so much of what goes on in Scottish courtrooms today rests on law enacted in the U.K. Parliament. He shows how, in the 19th century, military force as the means of maintaining order went into decline and a new meaning of order was enunciated by the ruling elite. It enlisted criminal law, judges and courts, police, and (though he says little about them) prisons to impose standards of health, sobriety, and industry on the population and thus reduced em-

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phasis on individual responsibility. That entailed new summary courts for which Parliament provided a simpler statutory procedure. However it is not suggested that the judges of the High Court obstructed the development of such lower jurisdictions through appeals. Indeed it could be claimed that, substantively and procedurally, they promoted the assumed goals of the new statutory law and even at times obsequiously stressed its supremacy.

Another chapter reads like an independent historical essay. It presents homicide as a paradigm of the Scottish legal tradition in which the distinctions between murder and culpable homicide (the equivalent of manslaughter) are manipulated by the advocates and judges and ratified by juries, then passed off as the expression of community values. This is perhaps to underplay the jury's power to apply an unexplained veto on the law the judges instruct them upon.

Farmer has written a book whose elegant style makes it a pleasure to read. It is full of penetrating insights and certainly carries forward several debates among Scots legal academics about the nature of the system they expound. But the reviewer has some misgivings about the structure of the book and whether it will bear the weight of the conclusions the author wishes to draw. His central thesis seems to be that the cardinal principle of Scots criminal justice is that the legal elite of patrician lawyers and judges shape the law as they think it should be in isolation from developments elsewhere, stressing continuity with the past and drawing upon canonized writers such as David Hume (nephew of the philosopher) and past judges to impart legitimacy to what they do. If that is so, then one might think the thrust of the book should have been on how the criminal justice system *really* works. He should have drawn upon, or conducted empirical inquiries into, for example, the arcane processes of the Crown Office, the prosecution authority, as doorkeepers of the criminal courts. The conventions of plea-bargaining would be a vivid example of custom operating outside the declared law, with the connivance of the judges.

Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law. By Alan Hunt. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. xix+466. $55.00.

Clare Crowston
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Sumptuary law regulated clothing, food, and other forms of conspicuous consumption in Europe through the 17th century. Author of several previous books on sociology and the law, Alan Hunt in *Governance of the Consuming Passions* challenges common interpretations of sumptuary law as futile or archaic relics of the medieval world. Instead, he situates the peak of sumptuary law precisely at the moment of transition from the premodern to the modern era. Drawing on existing historical studies, he outlines a common European trajectory of sumptuary laws, from their

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origins in Greek antiquity to their high point in the 16th century and their eventual submersion in protectionist economic regulation. He interprets the 16th-century burst of regulation primarily as an attempt to ensure the "recognizability" of social groups and gender boundaries in societies shaken by urbanization and the rise of capitalism. Although these new economic and social forces would quickly overcome the efficacy of sumptuary law, Hunt insists on the persistence of moralizing regulations on consumption to the present day.

The ambitions of this book reach well beyond the level of historical synthesis. Extending his previous work on Michel Foucault and the law—and his dissatisfaction with Foucault's account of law in premodern societies—Hunt offers his study as a contribution to the emerging field he describes as the sociology of governance. According to Hunt, the term "governance" refers to the range of institutions and organizations that act to control and direct their objects through a set of variable and incomplete practices or "projects." The advantage of this concept, he argues, is that it situates legal regulation and government within a larger framework of moral, economic, social, and political mechanisms. He thus uses sumptuary law to illuminate major shifts in projects of governance from the premodern to the modern era. First deployed as a means of reinforcing existing taxonomies, they then served to regulate struggles between old and new elites and finally to protect emerging national economies.

Apart from its contribution to the discipline of sociology, this book offers a great deal to historians, particularly those interested in the process of state formation and the role of law in the expansion of state power. By emphasizing the ways in which law constructs new objects of state intervention, Hunt provides an important key to understanding the social effects of government regulation. He also usefully rejects a top-down model of the state, insisting on the importance of individual responses and resistance to legal regulation and the existence of projects of governance outside official state institutions. Another significant contribution of the book derives from Hunt's interest in gender and the material aspects of sumptuary law. He addresses a series of fascinating issues around these themes, such as the function of appearance as a form of symbolic politics, women's appropriation of clothing as a response to established gender codes, and the role of material culture in social conflict in general.

Despite these achievements, the book suffers the inevitable failures of its ambitious scope as well as more serious problems of interpretation and analysis. Hunt's attempt to derive a common model for sumptuary law throughout Europe often obliges him to reduce the historical complexity of his cases. Although he argues that the function and significance of sumptuary laws shifted over time, he does not consider that they may have also differed a great deal across regions and followed distinct trajectories. His model relies on an underlying economic causality—the rise of capitalism and an urban bourgeoisie—that leads him to simplify social structures and systems of government and to downplay important geo-

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graphic variations. His lack of attention to economic production is also disappointing, given the extensive historical literature on the regulation of work. Hunt never answers the question of why governments did not attempt to enforce sumptuary legislation through the guilds or through import regulations.

The author's use of source material suffers from similar flaws. Hunt's reliance on existing historical studies produces an unfortunate unevenness of scale, chronology, and regional focus. He exacerbates this problem by jumping back and forth between periods and places and unproblematically combining modern examples and theorists with premodern ones. In a study ranging across Europe from antiquity to the 18th century, moreover, the author's use of exclusively English-language sources is a serious limitation. The book's inherent interest is too often marred by repetition, typographical errors, and the author's penchant for discussing several possible interpretations of an issue at length, only to reject them all and offer his own version. Finally, a 400-page treatment of fashion and the pleasures of self-presentation without a single picture amounts to a perversely ascetic reading experience.

Rituali di degradazione: Anatomia del processo Cusani. By Pier Paolo Giglioli, Sandra Cavicchioli, and Giolo Fele. Bologna: Mulino, 1997. Pp. 243.

David I. Kertzer
Brown University

In the early 1990s, the Italian political scene was shaken by dramatic revelations of political corruption, which with breathtaking speed led to the political demise of an entire generation of political leaders and their parties. Various efforts were undertaken to replace the First Republic, which had been established at the end of World War II, with the more wholesome Second Republic. A milestone in this social and political transformation was the trial of financier/businessman Sergio Cusani that began in October 1993 and ended half a year later. The first trial of Tangentopoli, as the web of corruption cases came to be collectively called, proved to be a dramatic galvanizing experience for the Italian people, who followed it with amazement through daily television broadcasts. Perhaps the most curious aspect of the trial is that its primary focus was not on the guilt or innocence of the lone defendant, Cusani, but rather on the moral and political guilt of the "political class," that is, the nation's political leadership. While Cusani refused to testify, many of the major political figures of the country were forced to appear, and through their testimony, many were disgraced.

Sociologists Pier Paolo Giglioli, Sandra Cavicchioli, and Giolo Fele employ a semiotic approach to examine the Cusani trial in this book (Giglioli has worked closely with Umberto Eco at the University of Bologna in

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establishing a research and training program in the science of communication), with heavy reliance on Erving Goffman's work on the presentation of self, stigma, and frame analysis. They view the trial as a rite of degradation and examine the verbal and symbolic strategies employed by prosecution, defense, and the various politicians who appeared before the tribunal. The first portion of the book, written by Giglioli, argues that the Cusani trial represented a crucial symbolic moment in the fall of the First Republic, "the public degradation of an entire political class" (p. 9), a rite of national purification. The leading prosecutor, Antonio Di Pietro, would become a national hero by embodying popular outrage at the corruption of the political elite. Yet, the course of the trial and of the scandals was not predetermined, for it depended on the symbolic strategies followed by the protagonists. As a result of the successful strategy employed by Di Pietro and his colleagues, by the end of the trial it was their own definition of the situation, their own "frame," that was imposed on the events and on the politicians for the great majority of the Italian population.

In the second part of the book, Cavicchioli focuses on the role played by television in the drama. She notes in particular how an odd alliance was formed between the prosecutors and the defense lawyer, all of whom were more interested in using the trial to showcase the sins of the country's major politicans than in focusing on exactly what the defendant did. The result was that, as the country's leaders were called as witnesses, both prosecutors and the defense lawyer turned on them and tried to enlarge the scope of the trial. Meanwhile, the public admitted to the trials served as a kind of Greek chorus. Their cries of derision in response to some of the testimony, for example, signaled to the millions of television viewers that the witness was a liar.

In the final section of the book, Fele examines the discursive strategies followed by the various protagonists, using the concept of "face" as employed by Goffman, and seeing the trial as a rite of passage for politicians whose identities were being inexorably altered. The object of the prosecution was not the conviction of the defendant but the "destruction on a symbolic level" of the politicians called in to testify (p. 195).

Fele shows how it was that some politicians came out of the trial holding their heads high and others were forever disgraced, results that had no relationship to their legal guilt or the extent of their corrupt behavior. Bettino Craxi, head of the Socialist Party and former Prime Minister (who later fled the country to avoid jail in connection with other trials) was largely unharmed by his appearance. He was allowed freedom to explain himself in his own terms because in doing so he discredited politicians from other parties, which the prosecutors saw as working to their advantage. By contrast, Christian Democratic party head and former prime minister Arnaldo Forlani was destroyed by the prosecution. Forlani made the mistake of adopting a strategy of arguing that he knew nothing of illegal political contributions, an insistence that subjected him to public ridicule: he was seen not only as a liar but as a fool.

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Rituali di degradazione has the virtue of chronicling a singularly important event in Italian political history. It also demonstrate how a sociological semiotic approach can help shed light on contemporary political developments.

Language, Charisma, and Creativity: The Ritual Life of a Religious Movement. By Thomas J. Csordas. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xxii+320. $40.00.

Mary Jo Neitz
University of Missouri

Thomas Csordas, an anthropologist, first encountered the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement in Columbus, Ohio, in 1973. At that time he researched a local prayer group for his master's thesis. He did more extensive fieldwork from 1976 to 1979 with the Word of God Prayer Group in Ann Arbor, Michigan (an extremely influential community, which has provided leadership for Charismatics both in the United States and abroad), and then studied healing ministries in New England in the late 1980s. Finally, he returned to Word of God in 1991 to look at the second generation Catholic Charismatics there. Csordas is familiar with both the broad issues facing the international movement and with issues enacted face-to-face in one covenant community. He begins this book with a descriptive account of the development of the movement, first in the United States, and then internationally. The middle section of the book articulates Csordas's thesis regarding the ritualization of practice and the radicalization of charisma. The third part of the book looks at the performance of ritual language in the Word of God community, including a semiotic analysis of an important prophecy.

Scholars studying both neo-Pentecostal movements, of which the Catholic Charismatic Renewal is one, and the earlier Pentecostal movements have remarked on their relative leaderlessness: there is no one charismatic founding figure. For Csordas, this becomes a starting point for reconceptualizing the concept of charisma. Csordas asks whether the Catholic Charismatic movement—named for the charismatic spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament—is a charismatic movement in the Weberian sense. His answer is that charisma in the social scientific sense should not be considered a characteristic of a person but rather a quality imputed by others to be of that person: he wishes to "de-entify charisma" (p. 138). Elaborated in an extensive analysis of language, Csordas asserts that charisma is rhetoric: "a collective, performative, intersubjective self-process" (p. 145).

Part of what is at issue for sociologists reading this book is the particular aspects of social movements problematized by different research traditions. Readers of this journal are no doubt more familiar with sociological approaches of resource mobilization and perhaps the more cultural ap-

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proach of the new social movement theorists. For many anthropologists studying religious movements, the paradigmatic movements are A. F. C. Wallace's revitalization movements, initiated by a leader who has a vision. While founding leaders have not been the main focus of current sociological work, framing the question in terms of the absence of the founding leader enables Csordas to examine charisma in terms of language, self processes, and embodiment in ways that sociologists who study social movements may find worth considering.

Distinct from the older "religions of peoples," Csordas sees a new category in religious movements like the Catholic Charismatics, "religions of the self," which he describes as reflections of postmodern cultural conditions. Csordas explains that "the source of meaning can hardly be secure given the decentering of authority in meaning, disclosure, and social form. Not only the self, but a particular form of self, takes precedence over peoples under the conditions of globalization of consumer culture" (p. 53). The self for Csordas is a fragmented postmodern self, continually reconstituted through a reflexive orientational process. With an understanding that the boundaries between everyday life and ritual are fluid, Csordas examines how ritual performance transforms conventional dispositions.

Weber's ongoing concern with organizational forms led him to emphasize the routinization of charisma and the move from prophetic to priestly leadership with organizational growth. Locating charisma in rhetoric and performance, Csordas moves the discussion of charisma from the terrain of organizations to the terrain of self processes. In the Word of God community daily life became ritualized, while, at the same time, charisma, contrary to what a Weberian analysis might predict, was radicalized. In Word of God "successive ritualizations went hand in hand with rhetorical escalations" with the understanding that compliance would result in greater access to divine power (p. 100).

The analysis of the process of the ritualization of daily life pays much attention to "gender discipline" in the community, in ways that explore the tensions between "premodern" and "postmodern" tendencies in the community. There is also an interesting discussion of the ways that charisma, as it becomes radicalized, is increasingly inscribed on the body. Csordas shows us how ritual practices become techniques of the body. For Csordas, the sacred self is also an embodied self. There is careful attention here to the local practices. Csordas observes that the experience of prophecy among Catholic Charismatics is not a trance state. In the Charismatic movement one does not merge with the divine, one "commits" a discrete self when one utters prophecy.

With its emphasis on ritual and performance this book offers a new framework for sociologists interested in social movements. The phenomenological and semiotic approaches that inform parts of this analysis are still relatively unintegrated into sociological analyses, and Csordas shows us part of what they can offer for understanding current cultural transformations.

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Veiled Threats: The Logic of Popular Catholicism in Italy. By Michael P. Carroll. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. Pp. xiii+275.

Adriano Prosperi
University of Pisa

Why do Italian Madonnas weep? And which threat lurks behind the veil that covers those miraculous images? No doubt, such questions are highly relevant: one only needs to consider the fact that Italian social life has been dominated for centuries by images of weeping and bleeding Madonnas. During the age of the Reformation, Italian heretics and dissenters criticized the practice of worshiping images—and particularly the images of Mary—arguing that it was a form of idolatry. Carroll's book is dedicated to the memory of the most famous of these Italian heretics, Giordano Bruno.

In this book, which is directed to sociologists, historians, and cultural anthropologists, Carroll deepens his previous studies on Italian popular Catholicism. With tight argumentation and a brilliant style of exposition, he lays down his vast knowledge of the Italian history and folklore of the last few centuries. The way in which the book begins and ends—that is, with the story of an Italian maternal grandmother, of her difficult infancy, and of her emigration to America—suffices to demonstrate the author's genuine interest in the subject and his ability to engage the reader's emotions. The image of Mary and the Child is often interpreted as a maternal and reassuring one or, alternatively, as the symbol of the Italians' love for children. However, historical data show that Italy is also the country of murdered and abandoned children. And the study of the relationship of the Italians with those veil-covered and miraculous images shows that these images also contain a somewhat threatening element.

Going back to the origins of the European debate on the cult of images—that is, to the times of the Reformation and Counterreformation—Carroll claims that both Calvin and the Council of Trent emphasized the relevance of this issue not because the issue itself was theologically important, but because they were responding to social concerns that were deeply radicated. On this occasion the split between Northern Europe and Italy emerged, and a "popular Catholicism" imposed its needs and views on those who were in charge of controlling them, that is, on the bishops. Thus, "popular Catholicism" may be understood as the "national Italian way" to Catholicism. As an alternative to the model of the "two monads"—on the one hand, the official religion of ecclesiastical authority and ruling class, intellectually correct and purged, and, on the other hand, a popular religion that still included many remnants from a pagan past—Carroll proposes a model in which the two forms of Catholicism are related to each other and result in a cultural formation of compromise. According to the "two monads model," official Catholicism is the only one to play an active historical role, whereas "popular religion" remains tendentially passive. On the contrary, this study argues that such a relation-

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ship may be inverted, if one acknowledges the active function played by what Carroll defines as the "logic of popular Catholicism."

How does this logic function? The answer comes from examining the importance of the cult of images in the Italian history of the last five centuries (chap. 1), from studying the way in which the ecclesiastical hierarchy developed a variant of Catholicism that welcomed the cult of images (chap. 2), and from exploring the devotional practices of religious orders as the result of the deep rootedness of their christocentrism in popular Catholicism (chap. 3). As is well known, the Italian cult of images is not directed to the Madonnas by Raphael or Leonardo, but rather to poor and worthless images that become part of an exchange relationship of gifts and protection: that is to say, the poor and neglected image of the Madonna performs miracles in exchange for veneration. The logic of exchange of popular Catholicism also includes the souls of Purgatory (chap. 4), the bones of the deceased—in particular, of those who died by the hand of justice—(chap. 5), the saints' relics (chap. 6), and uncorrupted corpses (chap. 8). This last cult is the proof that the Italian clergy, immersed in social life through the network of *chiese ricettizie* (chap. 7), fully absorbed the logic of popular Catholicism. Carroll argues that the absence of a clear distinction between rulers and ruled—which, according to the author, was typical not only of the ecclesiastical government in the countryside, with its *chiese ricettizie,* but also of the political tradition of the Italian city government—is the cause of the lasting conflation of immanent and transcendent. This argument, based on Durkheim's model, raises some objections. For example, in the South of the *chiese ricettizie,* entire populations were tried and executed in the 16th century for upholding the idea of a radically spiritualized and transcendent relationship with God.

It is more difficult to discuss the other cause discussed by Carroll, namely, that the relationship of the Italians with Mary derives from the Italian tradition of sending children out to nurse—a practice that allegedly might have blocked the psychological development of entire generations to its oral phase and that transfers the maternal function to the dry breasts of the nurse. This conclusion is not only "frankly speculative" (p. xii) but also, and particularly, nonverifiable as is always the case when one imposes the schemes of the Freudian theory of sexuality not on live patients, but onto past generations. The history of the children's condition in Italy in the 16th and 17th centuries, as reconstructed by Ottavia Niccoli (see her *Il seme della violenza: Putti, fanciulli e mammoli nell'Italia tra Cinque e Seicento* [Laterza, 1995]), seems to have been shaped by problems and factors other than nursing. It is true, however, that Italian history shows the existence of a link between Mary's appearances, the souls of Purgatory, and maternal milk—a link that is documented not in the unscrutable subconsciousness of past generations, but rather in the iconography of Mary and in the history of her appearances. The iconographical theme of Mary exhibiting her breast (the *ostentatio uberum*) as a symbol of piety toward the souls of Purgatory had classical

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precedents, was common in Germany and Flanders, and caught on quite vigorously in Naples in the 15th century, until it was eventually censored with success by the ecclesiastical authority (see Pierroberto Scaramella, *Le Madonne del Purgatorio: Iconografia e religione in Campania tra Rinascimento e Controriforma* [Marietti, 1991], p. 215, and Ottavia Niccoli, "Madonne di montagna: Note su apparizioni e santuari nelle valli alpine," in *Cultura d'élite e cultura popolare nell'arco alpino fra Cinque e Seicento,* edited by O. Besomi and C. Caruso [Birkhäuser Verlag, 1995], pp. 104–10).

These observations are meant to contribute to the discussion that Carroll's book will certainly stimulate. One has to acknowledge, however, that the main thesis proposed by this study has been soundly demonstrated: Italian popular Catholicism of the last five centuries was not invented by the ecclesiastical world; on the contrary, the laity's "creative answer" has had a significant impact in the shaping of its constituent characters.

Translated from the Italian by Stefano Mengozzi

Imperiled Innocents: Anthony Comstock and Family Reproduction in Victorian America. By Nicola Beisel. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997. Pp. x+275. $35.00.

Elisabeth S. Clemens
University of Arizona

The moral panics of the past often invite easy laughter. Compared with the problems of the present, how are we to take seriously the social threat posed by, of all things, skating rinks? There is too much obvious humor in their critic's high-minded questions: "Does it improve a young girl's modesty or morals to fall in a heap on the skating rink floor, with perhaps her feet in the air and her clothes tossed over her head? Is it good for her proper training to even see other females in such a plight?" (p. 123). Upon reading Nicola Beisel's elegant analysis in *Imperiled Innocents: Anthony Comstock and Family Reproduction in Victorian America,* however, it becomes clear that we should take such movements for moral reform very seriously. Although the objects of such movements may appear less than menacing in hindsight, Beisel argues persuasively that late 19th-century efforts to suppress abortion, contraceptive devices, pornography, gambling, and, yes, even skating rinks, reveal the workings of critical processes of class formation in the United States. Her analysis demands a recognition of the central role of the family in class reproduction, a reconsideration of the relation between class and status, and a deep appreciation of the centrality of culture to social structuration.

The central character in *Imperiled Innocents* is Anthony Comstock, an entrepreneurial reformer of the Gilded Age who repeatedly mobilized moral reform efforts, particularly in New York City and, in the process,

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secured the passage of "Comstock Laws" regulating the circulation of obscene materials through the mails as well as a special appointment for himself in the U.S. Post Office to enforce these laws. For sociologists, Comstock's efforts are notable for their consistent focus on the conjuncture of moral reform with the fate of children, and therefore with families, and therefore with the core mechanisms of social mobility and reproduction. Families, Beisel argues, "are the stuff of which classes are constructed; it is through families that classes are reproduced" (p. 7). The fate of families rested on successful marriages and the maintenance of social standing, either of which could be threatened by the unseemly behavior of children. "Vice raised the specter of the permeability of class boundaries and the possibility of children falling in the class system" (p. 57). Beisel's argument diverges from other analyses that have treated moral reform movements as efforts to control women (as opposed to regulating families) or as products of the social insecurity of the lower middle class. Funded by millionaires and men listed in the social registers of eastern cities, Comstock's moral reform movements spoke to the fears of elites and would-be elites.

Beisel's analysis insistently elides the traditional distinction between class and status, in order "to understand how culture (and the defense of cultures) is related to class" (p. 209). Enriching Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital with an appreciation of the politics of the family as a critical site of class reproduction, Beisel adroitly uses moral crusades, conflicts, and scandals to expose the "cultural maps that enable people, in this case upper-class people, to interpret their situation and act on it" (p. 157). The result is an exemplary work of cultural analysis—as well as a delightful read. Beisel makes rigorous use of comparisons among cities to isolate the threat that immigrants posed to the political foundations of elite status in Boston and New York but not in Philadelphia. She develops comparisons across moral reform efforts, both successes and failures, that identify the frames or accounts that resonated most powerfully in different settings, revealing in great detail the cultural maps of American elites. By situating moral dilemmas in multiple social settings—Is a nude pornographic when it is a photograph? a "fine art" painting? a photograph or etching of that same painting?—Beisel expertly reveals the conjuncture of class and culture. Deeply informed by the widespread renewal of interest in cultural theory, *Imperiled Innocents* persuasively demonstrates the empirical power of cultural analysis and its significance for at least one core theoretical question in the discipline, the production and reproduction of class.

The consolidation of class privilege is, in the end, based on a sleight of hand through which all the hard work of constructing class is sublimated beneath a language of natural aristocracy, good breeding, and social grace. Nineteenth-century elites recognized this alchemy of class formation: "The rage of Wall Street is to hunt the Philosopher's Stone, to convert all baser things into gold, which is but dross; but ours is the higher ambition to convert your useless gold into things of living beauty that

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shall be a joy to a whole people for a thousand years" (p. 159). *Imperiled Innocents* reveals the backstage mechanisms of class formation but does not diminish the significance of these efforts at social alchemy. In recovering the moral reform movements of the past, Beisel has constructed both an elegant work of cultural analysis and a powerful theoretical lens through which to reconsider the moral controversies of our own time.

The Culture of Adolescent Risk-Taking. By Cynthia Lightfoot. New York: Guilford Press, 1997. Pp. xviii+187.

Laurence Steinberg
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Adults have long been both irritated and puzzled by the rashness of youth. Numerous psychological and social explanations for the putatively greater propensity of adolescents to take risks have been offered over the years, and, it is safe to say that few of these accounts have withstood the test of empirical time. These scholarly failures notwithstanding, policy makers and practitioners continue to lament the recklessness of teenagers, and social scientists continue to search for the "real" cause of adolescent risk taking. Despite the best efforts of academic researchers, though, unprotected sex, underage drinking, experimentation with illicit drugs, and fast driving remain mainstays of adolescence in contemporary America.

The Culture of Adolescent Risk-Taking departs from most current views of risky behavior—views that, for the most part, attempt to analyze adolescent risk taking within the framework of behavioral decision theory. According to such models, adolescent risk taking, like any behavior, can be modeled as the rational (or near-rational) outcome of an orderly calculus, in which the costs and benefits of various courses of action are fed into some giant discriminant function that resides within the adolescent's cortex. Not so, argues Cynthia Lightfoot, who contends that analyzing the logic of risk taking overlooks the interpersonal and symbolic culture in which risk taking occurs. In her view, context trumps cortex.

Lightfoot is not the first to suggest that the arid analytic approach of behavioral decision theory leaves something to be desired, at least as far as an explanation of adolescent risk taking goes. Many other writers have suggested that we look at young people's risk taking as a social and interpersonal, not cognitive, phenomenon that can not be adequately understood without factoring into the equation such powerful forces as peer pressure, societal expectations for adolescence as a period in the life span, and cultural fads and fashions. *The Culture of Adolescent Risk-Taking,* though, promises to be different; it promises to take us deep inside the phenomenology of adolescent risk taking, through intensive interviews with real young people themselves to find out "what it means to be a teenager." Never mind that the teenagers Lightfoot interviews are all up-

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per-middle-class suburban residents of an affluent section of a North Carolina university town, recruited through a snowball sample that originated with a child of one of the author's friends.

No, empirical social science is not the strong suit of *The Culture of Adolescent Risk-Taking*. It's not that the research is qualitative—I'm all for qualitative research, but qualitative research has standards, too—but that the empirical work here is such an obviously half-hearted add-on to what is, fundamentally, a theoretical and critical analysis. (I found myself reminded of a colleague who once remarked that he had stopped doing research because the data never fit his theories.) Some of Lightfoot's ideas are interesting enough on their own, and they are not, to my mind, strengthened at all by the snippets of interviews with teenagers who seem jarringly unlike the average American adolescent. In 20 years of research with adolescents, I've yet to meet one who speaks like this:

> More and more my risk-taking is a conscious effort at experience and growth. I'm thinking ahead more of how it's going to help me in terms of experience. I want to reach out and touch as many things as I can. I'm kind of afraid that life is too short to be content with what is easy to attain (p. 99).

Occasional insights into adolescent social behavior and peer relations are scattered throughout the book, and Lightfoot's assertion that some amount of risk taking is necessary for both mental health and development is a reasonable enough starting point for her analysis—if, perhaps, little more than warmed-over Erik Erikson with a dash here and there of Paul Ricoeur. But Lightfoot's argument is seldom pressed very much beyond its beginning point, and original observations about adolescents or their behavior in *The Culture of Adolescent Risk-Taking* are few and far between. In the end, our understanding of adolescent risk taking is not especially enhanced by Lightfoot's analysis. More important, one has to suffer through pedantic passages such as this to find them:

> Although adolescents' risk-taking can be construed in terms of a struggle with the authoritative discourse of another, it is also a mechanism for creating a discourse of their own, the internally persuasive one that Bakhtin wrote of. By these lights, the reflective awareness that is engendered, the coming into ideological consciousness that follows in the wake of such struggle, is coupled dialectically to processes of sociocultural identification. Untanglings and entanglements; engagement with another's point of view is the fountainhead of mindedness. (Pp. 113–114)

Lightfoot's book does not so much analyze adolescent risk taking as "interpret" it. She argues that the phenomenon is properly seen as a "transformative experience" that can best be understood in terms of the adolescent's quest for personal growth (risk taking here is likened to the play of children or the creative pursuits of adults) and effort to join in the "shared narrative" of the adolescent peer culture (risk taking as a form of social participation).

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In plain language, adolescents take risks (*a*) because it is fun and (*b*) because everyone else is doing it. May we have the next theory, please?

Practicing Desire: Homosexual Sex in the Era of AIDS. By Gary W. Dowsett. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996. Pp. xiii+322. $49.50 (cloth); $17.95 (paper).

John H. Gagnon
State University of New York, Stony Brook

Kenneth Burke once wrote that he found reading Freud "suggestive to the point of bewilderment" (*The Philosophy of Literary Form* [University of California Press, 1973, p. 258]). A full response to *Practicing Desire,* an important and bewildering book, would require copying out excerpts and responding to them in detail, sometimes with a "yes," sometimes with a "yes, but. . . ," sometimes with "yes and no," and still other times with "no, but. . . ." The complexity of my response is a tribute to the intensity of the theoretical struggle of the author, a struggle that is not ended by the last page of text.

This struggle is attested to by the tension between the title and the subtitle of the work. The larger theoretical impulse of the book, an impulse that wishes to address the issue of the various ways in which variously socially constituted men practice desire with various other men, and the promise of the subtitle, "Homosexual Sex in the Era of AIDS," are somewhat incongruous. This is not a report about men's sex with men during the period of the AIDS epidemic, though there is solid "reporting" of the facts of the AIDS epidemic among homosexual men in Australia, facts that Dowsett has had a significant role in collecting. However the weight of the book is about the complexities of the formation and practice of sexual desire. Indeed a goodly proportion of the life histories told by the 20 men who supplied Dowsett's primary data occur well before the epidemic and often the epidemic does not loom large in many of their stories.

What the epidemic provides is the occasion for thinking deeply about how men learn how to practice sex (predominantly with other men) in different social contexts and how changing historical contexts affect how sex is practiced. AIDS in this case is a changing historical context that affects both individuals and the social collectivities in which they are engaged. In a similar manner Dowsett examines the emergent character of the gay community as a context for sexual practice and as receptive or resistant to the sexual and other interests of different men depending (primarily) on class and age and sexual fashion.

Of Dowsett's many intellectual struggles, there are two that he implicitly and explicitly returns to again and again. One struggle is with those who would heterosexualize desire among men by using the woman-man sex and gender template as their interpretative frame for understanding

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men's sex with men. The second would be with the very phrase that I have just used. "Men's sex with men" seems to Dowsett to reinforce the conventional gender polarity, making men all alike rather than various in their sexual desires and practices.

These concerns lead to a very interesting discussion of the "active anus," which challenges the assumption that active equals inserting and passive equals being penetrated—a discussion that might be extended, forgive the expression, to woman-man sex. The concept, the "active vagina," comes to mind. Such a concept of the woman as seeking penetration has been recognized by psychoanalysis but only negatively, as in the fantasy of "vagina dentata," in which the sexually active woman equals danger to the man.

Because many of the theoretical issues raised are intellectually and politically difficult, most of them are not resolved. Dowsett is deeply sympathetic to the working-class men in his study, but at the same time he resists an essentialized class analysis. He is sensitive to the problems raised by heterosexual patriarchy, but he is unwilling to extend the analytic categories generated by these analyses of this phenomena directly to the lives of men whose lives are differently related to heterosexuality. In the last analysis, what Dowsett wants is to separate the understanding of the ways in which various kinds of men practice desire with other men from understandings developed from other problem areas, even those that appear to be closely related. Desire between men with different biographies in different historical and social contexts have to be understood as an ongoing social practice with its own integrity and authenticity, not as derivative of the dominant practices or understandings of gender or heterosexuality.

There is much to be praised about this book, but I am less comfortable with the methods of data collection. Dowsett has talked with 20 men whose "theorized life histories" offer anecdotal evidence for his theoretical arguments. There is a good deal of praise for such a method among those disenchanted with structured interview schedules used in probability sample surveys (which do have the virtue being systematic enough to be criticized). However there is very little careful consideration given to the problems of "life histories" as stories, particularly those that involve a single semistructured encounter with the storyteller. There is even less concern given to the problems of interpretation of the story by the auditor and transcriber. These comments, and others that might be made, should not be read as a plea to "quantify" or make more "rigorous" these methods. It is only a plea not to sanctify "qualitative" research methods as if they had no limitations.

In Kenneth Burke's discussion of Freud, he contrasts the mode of interpretation that observes a cluster of "ingredients" and takes one of them as the causal one (as Freud did with sex) with its alternative mode of interpretation that stresses the relations between the ingredients in the cluster. It is this latter strategy that characterizes Dowsett's approach to the many practices of desire embedded in changing historical and social

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contexts. Read *Practicing Desire* and discover the joys of bewilderment.

One of the Children: Gay Black Men in Harlem. By William G. Hawkeswood. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xx+241. $15.00.

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In *One of the Children,* William G. Hawkeswood has written a thorough ethnography of the commonplace contemporary urban culture of a group of gay men of African descent. It is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately assess how "representative" this one "snowball" sample of men is, given the ongoing complexities of negotiating the stigma of gay identity in any context, especially late 20th-century Harlem. Despite this potential limitation of representation, Hawkeswood has made an important contribution in light of the fact that research on gay men "rarely focuses on minority groups" (p. 7). This book helps to fill that void, giving us a rich detailed familiarity with the institutional affiliations, identity practices, and spiritual sensibilities of 57 adult gay men of African descent living in Harlem.

The title of the book is a phrase that is commonly used by black gay men to describe another gay man of African descent, also referred to as another "brother in the life," or "family" (i.e., fictive kin). At its best, *One of the Children* presents an engaging ethnography of the day-to-day lives of these men. Beginning with the question of how these men got to Harlem in the first place, Hawkeswood offers a view of diversity that encompasses a range from transplanted southerners who followed the earlier move of an older sibling in the process of chain migration to longtime residents whose families have called Harlem home for many generations. This diversity is also reflected in the numerous class and family backgrounds in which these men were reared.

Amid this diversity, the common threads among these men, in part, rest in the strong maintenance of their nonresident (blood) family ties, their ongoing struggles in living out the contradictions of the black church while maintaining various intersecting institutional affiliations, and balancing work lives with their sex or love lives. As a result, the book presents a praxis of black gay male identity. Some of these men use selective veils and circumstantial patterns of interaction and communication to be gay only in the way they love; their gayness has little impact on other aspects of their life. Others seek out the sustenance of a more consistent presentation of self that seems to change little from one setting to another, a "gay realness." In both choices, there is a tendency toward being "authentic," in doing the tasks of negotiating gay stigma while striving for a life well lived. For these men who healthfully see themselves as "black

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first," both the "selective veil" and the gay realness choices are examples of the potential benefits (and potential problems) of living prioritized identities.

Unfortunately, too often the book overstates conclusions, going well beyond what the data can effectively support. For example, after briefly considering issues of gay socialization and the coming out process of gay identity, Hawkeswood concludes that "issues of sexual preference apparently are not a paramount concern to black people whose society has already been marginalized by mainstream white America" (p. 140). This is, at best, a gross oversimplification of the often contentious dealings related to sex and sexuality in much of contemporary African America.

Second, the book is quite weak in not providing a systematic analysis of the interrelationships between these diverse life details. In other words, Hawkeswood begins by suggesting that "social-organizational and social-interaction theory underlie [my] analysis of this gay black male community's relationship with outside, dominant groups" (p. 12). But this theoretical foundation is rather weak.

Third, an understanding of many aspects of these men's lives is often stunted by too much presentation without elaboration on issues where elaboration would be quite important to the book's broader intent (e.g., presenting the proportion of the sample that has ever "hustled" [having been paid for sex] with little additional information, limited speculation about the background factors that shape the likelihood that "being gay" will be viewed as an identity, as more than an act of sex). This problem is coupled with a curiously unsystematic analysis of these men's social networks, especially since social networks or fictive kin relations are central to the book's stated intent. The specific network dimensions (e.g., frequency of contact, intimacy, duration, etc.) are never thoroughly considered. Also, it would have been helpful to have been given a heuristic or model to illustrate how overlapping ties, interdependence among those ties, and other such issues fit into respondents' lives.

Despite these limitations, *One of the Children* is a very needed and valuable book that provides an accurate nonsensationalized view of an easily marginalized group. These individuals were, for the most part, not immobilized by any sense of a marginality rooted in shame, which made this book a joy to read. The text is strong on details in the lives of these men, with many long richly detailed quotes that provide us with a better understanding of how they give meaning and significance to many aspects of their lives.

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Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation. By Arlene Stein. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. x+256. $45.00 (cloth); $16.95 (paper).

Judith A. Howard
University of Washington

On April 30, 1997, Ellen DeGeneres came out. Virtually every lesbian I know who came of age during the 1970s women's movement—not to mention millions of other U.S. viewers—was glued to the TV screen during this episode, gathering to celebrate this milestone in the public acknowledgement of queer existence. When I asked a twenty-something lesbian friend the next day what she thought of this episode, she responded, "Oh, I didn't see it." This comment exemplified the generational dynamics Arlene Stein characterizes in *Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation.*

Stein's *Sisters, Sexperts, Queers: Beyond the Lesbian Nation* (Plume, 1993) is an edited collection of voices of younger lesbians. Essays in that volume focused on issues of identity, difference, debate, and change within lesbian communities, all themes Stein develops much more fully in this volume. *Sex and Sensibility* (an inspired title) traces the themes and transitions of lesbian identities, consciousness, and cultures from the 1970s through the 1990s, drawing on, but not limited to, interviews with 40 lesbians, 30 of whom became adults during the 1970s and 10 born between 1961 and 1971. As Stein notes, the legacy of 1970s lesbian feminism has become highly contested within lesbian communities, with some from the earlier generation fighting for the continuing importance of a distinct and relatively homogenous lesbian identity, and others, mostly of younger generations, worrying more about the dangers of categorization.

Reading this book was a curious experience for me. My own history was described too accurately; I found myself thinking it could not have been that simplistic, that rigid. But then again, that is history. The times Stein writes of were more rigid, in some ways more simplistic, and they were so for others as well as for lesbians and gay men. There were powerful voices of critique and dissent, but these tended to be more contained; the political rhetoric encouraged conformity.

Stein traces a history of movement from essentialist understandings of sexuality to considerably more nuanced constructionist understandings. This history suggests how closely aligned lesbian thinking was with that of other social groups, how much both personal and political theories reflect the times in which they are generated. When she writes, "the movement from 'old gay' to 'new gay' worlds signified the transition from a world in which medicalized conceptions of homosexuality were virtually undisputed to one in which they were loudly challenged, from a time when lesbians occupied a deviant social role . . . to a time when lesbianism became an identity, a reflective basis for self construction . . . a movement toward greater consciousness" (p. 24) she could be writing also

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of gender, also, in some ways, of race. Ways in which lesbian feminism related to other social movements are not a major theme for Stein, although she lays the groundwork for what could be a significant comparative study of such questions.

Perhaps because there have been other histories that touch on the origins of lesbian feminism, the early chapters of the book offer fewer new contributions than the later chapters, which explore where those lesbian feminists are now and the considerable contradictions of their contemporary lives. Stein points to sex as one major theme throughout the course of this history; 1970s lesbians tended to minimize sex in favor of community, culture, and politics. Later generations began to claim sex more boldly, even defiantly. Interestingly, in many ways Ellen's long-awaited coming out spoke more to sensibility than it did to sex, pointing to the contradictions that often accompany media attempts to cover all their audience bases at one and the same time. Although this sort of complexity is not always present in Stein's analyses, she does offer strikingly insightful discussions of bisexuality, political diversity, how white lesbians position themselves (or do not) in terms of their own and others' racial positions. I would have liked even more discussion of how 1990s consumerism has approached lesbian cultures; does Stein, for example, think this trend is specific to lesbians, or is consumerism now reaching out to a variety of otherwise stigmatized groups?

My favorite chapter was "Sleeping with the Enemy," where Stein takes up a fascinating question: What does it mean when lesbians sleep with men, when, indeed, they form life partnerships with men? This chapter is a wonderfully nuanced discussion of these complexities and the challenges they pose to those who do, despite their politics, endorse an essentialist view of sexuality. Her identification of pansexual desires, among even the most ardently essentialist lesbians, is a generally unspoken and valuable observation. (I have seen virtually nothing by gay men on this same topic, an omission worth pondering.) And, Stein's connection of many of these changes to the fact that the earlier generation of lesbians are simply getting older and moving through other life stages, is important; this seemingly obvious point speaks to the importance of syntheses of family, life course, and political sociologies.

This is a nuanced, exhaustive history of a vital chapter in a period that was a coming of age in lesbian and gay political and personal consciousness. Stein's work joins Barry D. Adam's *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement* (rev. ed., Twayne, 1995), Lillian Faderman's *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers* (Columbia University Press, 1991), Ken Plummer's *Modern Homosexualities* (Routledge, 1992), and others in contributing to the development of what is becoming a lesbian and gay sociological canon.

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